

Ann Miles Gordon • Kathryn Williams Browne

# **3e** BEGINNING ESSENTIALS **in early childhood education**





# Beginning Essentials in Early Childhood Education

Third Edition

**Ann Miles Gordon**

**Kathryn Williams Browne**

Skyline College



Australia • Brazil • Japan • Korea • Mexico • Singapore • Spain • United Kingdom • United States

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## Preface

### Our Mission: The Essential Approach

Tomorrow's teachers will confront the challenge of teaching a diverse group of learners differentiated by their abilities, ethnic and cultural backgrounds, family support, values, and beliefs. They will learn to navigate the tension between standards and assessments, and developmentally appropriate principles and practice. New teachers must understand the meaning of professionalism and how their personal development fosters their professional commitment. In order to accomplish this daunting but exciting task, students need a text that is current, comprehensive, and able to connect knowledge and theory to the classroom—one that has eclectic viewpoints and a variety of models that depend on their understanding of themselves as members of a lively and fulfilling profession. *Beginning Essentials in Early Childhood Education* accomplishes that goal.

The purpose of *Beginning Essentials* is to promote the competence and effectiveness of new teachers through the *essentials*: the absolute basic and indispensable elements that create a foundation for teaching young children. These *essentials* include knowledge, skills, attitudes, and philosophies to help form the teaching experience. The authors express a viewpoint about quality early education and what practices ensure excellence. In the area of cultural sensitivity and multicultural relationships, a “both/and” attitude is encouraged, following the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) guidelines for developmentally appropriate practices. The value of learning how to use the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct is highlighted in each chapter, as is the importance of adapting the NAEYC Standards for Early Childhood Professional Preparation.

*Beginning Essentials* maintains that every child and family is unique and that they deserve the respect and affirmation of their cultural identity. The text weaves a strong multicultural perspective and consciousness throughout in order to help prospective teachers and caregivers increase their sensitivity to different cultural practices and values.

### How Do We Meet the Needs of Today's Learners?

*Beginnings Essentials* is intended for college students who are interested in young children, beginning teachers who plan to engage in early care and education, practitioners in direct services to children and families, and professionals in the workforce who are enlarging their knowledge base. Throughout our comprehensive chapter coverage and unique pedagogical features, we provide a resource that meets the needs of today's early childhood educators.

### Chapter Organization

The book is organized into four sections, each of which asks one of the questions that defines the comprehensive nature of teaching young children: (1) What Is the Field of Early Childhood Education? (2) Who Is the Young Child? (3) Who Are the Teachers? and (4) What Is Being Taught? The book's flexibility allows instructors to begin with any section that seems appropriate to meet the needs of their classes.

#### Section 1: What Is the Field of Early Childhood Education?

Descriptions of early childhood history, current issues, and the types of programs provide a basis for understanding the complexity of the field.

In Chapter 1, history and current issues are combined to give students a sense of progression and a feel for issues that are challenging today's teachers. The past and the present are woven into a smooth story with four key themes: the importance of childhood, social reform, transmitting values, and professionalism.

Chapter 2 moves the student directly into the variety and depth of early childhood programs and the importance of developmentally appropriate practice (DAP) in creating good programs.

The principles of DAP are matched with examples of DAP in action so that students will see a direct correlation between the DAP criteria and classroom application.



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## Section 2: Who Is the Young Child?

This section begins with a discussion of the young child's growth, followed by an overview of the developmental and learning theories that form the cornerstone of our knowledge about children.

Chapter 3 provides students with an understanding of the nature of the children they will teach and their common characteristics and wide individual differences. Word Pictures, which are age-level descriptions, are a popular feature with students who have used this text, as they enable students to anticipate children's needs and plan appropriate experiences for them.

Chapter 4 gives the student concise descriptions of universal and life-span theories and other developmental topics on which sound teaching principles and practices are based. Play, as a cornerstone of learning, and updated information on brain-based research provide further application of theory to classroom use.

## Section 3: Who Are the Teachers?

This section defines the aggregate of influences that teachers in the early childhood setting reflect. Each chapter enlarges the student's view of what makes up a professional teacher.

Chapter 5 describes the roles and responsibilities of an early childhood teacher as "professionalism in action" and introduces students to a broader definition of teaching. Examples of everyday ethical situations provide opportunities for students to discuss their own values and beliefs in response to the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct. The chapter also explores team-teaching situations and the importance of teacher evaluations.

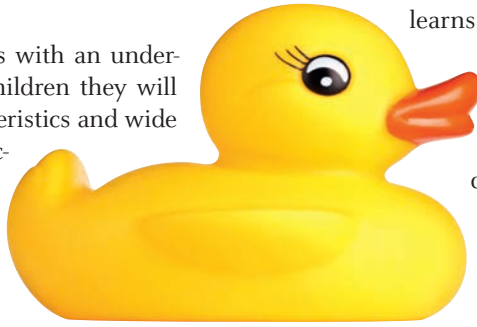
Chapter 6 enhances the student's ability to observe, record, and assess the behavior of young children. Along with a comprehensive description of observation tools and effective techniques, there are updated segments about child evaluation, early learning standards, and concerns about testing and screening.

Chapter 7 demonstrates how guidance and behavior are critical factors in the life of a classroom teacher. Problem solving, conflict resolution, and a wide range of guidance techniques give students the necessary tools to guide young children toward their potential.

Chapter 8 offers a perspective on the all-important collaboration of families and teachers in creating the best possible learning environment for young children. Discussions of the definitions of family, today's family structures, and challenges facing families bring a relevancy to students.

## Section 4: What Is Being Taught?

This section reflects on what is being taught through the environment and the basic elements of creating curriculum.



Chapter 9 defines the characteristics of high-quality environments that include elements of health, safety, and nutrition, as well as anti-bias and self-help approaches and the inclusion of children with disabilities. The student learns how the deliberate use of the environment serves as a teaching strategy for appropriate behavior and learning.

Chapter 10 is based on the premise that a play-based curriculum is the foundation for early childhood learning, and the chapter provides students with examples of developmentally and culturally appropriate approaches. Students will learn the importance of play, emergent and integrated curricula, projects, and how different learning styles can be applied to curriculum development. A summary of curriculum models and their key characteristics and philosophies demonstrate the application of DAP in the classroom.

## Special Features and Pedagogy

We offer numerous learning aids and engaging features to enrich the learning experience of students and to connect theory to practice. These include:

- **Student Learning Outcomes** at the beginning of each chapter are correlated to the main sections in each chapter and show students what they need to know to process and understand the information in the chapter. After completing the chapter, students should be able to demonstrate how they can use and apply their new knowledge and skills.
- **Truth or Fiction Questions** at the beginning of each chapter engage students' curiosity as they find the content and answers highlighted in each chapter.
- **NAEYC Standards** for Early Childhood Professional Preparation at the beginning of each chapter relate to chapter content, stressing the importance of becoming familiar with professional requirements and accountability.
- **Teacher Talks**, found in each chapter, are personal stories by early childhood educators that add a realistic image to the art of being a classroom teacher. Each vignette brings to light an issue or reflection that all teachers face at one time or another.
- **Special Focus Boxes** discuss themes of primary importance. Each chapter will have highlighted feature boxes on *Diversity*, *DAP* (developmentally appropriate practice), *Professionalism*, *Standards*, and *Ethics* that emphasize for students the importance of these themes in the early childhood field.
- **Key Terms** are embedded in the margins of each chapter and located where they are introduced to remind the student of the most important concepts.
- **TeachSource Video** features allow students and instructors to relate important chapter content to real-life

scenarios in early child care settings. TeachSource Videos provide students with an opportunity to hear from real educators who are doing the work that they are preparing to do. The TeachSource Videos and other engaging video clips provided on the Education CourseMate website offer critical-thinking questions and give students ample opportunities for reflection and discussion.

- The **Word Pictures** special section in Chapter 3 describes the major characteristics of children from infancy through 8 years of age. This popular feature helps students become familiar with expected behaviors in young children as a frame of reference for creating programs and planning curriculum that responds to the children's interests as well as their abilities and needs.
- **End-of-Chapter Aids** provide the student with an overall review of the material within the chapter. The Summary is aligned with the Learning Outcomes at the beginning of the chapter and emphasizes how the key Standards and Learning Outcomes were achieved.
- **Correlation Chart** to the latest NAEYC Standards for Early Childhood Professional Preparation is found on the inside covers of this book, helping students make connections between what they are learning in the textbook and the standards. The handy chart makes it easy to see where the key standards in the field are addressed in specific chapters and topics throughout the text.
- **Culturally Appropriate Practice and DAP** continue to be the subtheme of *Beginning Essentials* through the emphasis on an understanding of the child and the **factors affecting a child's growth and development**. We believe it is important that students realize the deep and crucial contributions that children's families, cultures, and languages make to development. NAEYC's years of experience in the definition and application of DAP has given further insights, which are reflected throughout the book.

## What's New in This Edition

The third edition of *Beginning Essentials* represents a completely updated work, both in the content and presentation. Some highlights of the new coverage and features include:

- NEW—**Teacher Talks**, written experiences from classroom teachers, are found in every chapter to bring the reality of the classroom to students. These vignettes enhance the student's understanding of the variety of roles and responsibilities teachers have as well as provide a window to the personal and professional growth of a teacher.

- NEW—**Brain Research Says....** is a new feature in each chapter that highlights some of the most important aspects of brain research and development today. The research is linked to classroom use and teacher application through questions that invite students to reflect on how this information relates to their teaching.
- NEW—**Teachsource Digital Downloads** are downloadable, practical, and professional resources, often customizable, that allow students to immediately implement and apply the textbook's content in the field. The student downloads these tools and keeps them forever, enabling pre-service teachers to begin to build their library of practical, professional resources. Look for the TeachSource Digital Downloads label that identifies these items.
- NEW—Special Focus Boxes add greater depth and information in many chapters.
- NEW—Topics such as technology in the classroom, media culture, behavior that is challenging, and intentional and reflective teaching have been added to broaden the students knowledge of early education.
- NEW—The addition of a chart on Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum Models clarifies and defines the differences and similarities of early childhood programs.
- NEW—Updated and revised charts, checklists, and figures support each chapter's content and highlight important information for the student.
- NEW—**TeachSource Videos** feature footage from the classroom to help students relate key chapter content to real-life scenarios. Critical-thinking questions provide opportunities for in-class or online discussion and reflection.

## Accompanying Teaching and Learning Resources

The third edition of *Beginning Essentials* offers many ancillary materials that can support and enhance the text experience and an instructor's presentation of the course. From planning to presentation to testing, materials are available to provide students with an engaging and relevant exposure to the broad scope of topics in early childhood education.

## Instructor's Manual and Test Bank

An online Instructor's Manual accompanies this book. The instructor's manual contains information to assist the instructor in designing the course, including teaching tips, chapter outlines, review questions, key terms, additional readings, chapter summaries, and resource lists. For assessment support, the updated test bank includes true/false, multiple-choice, matching, and short answer questions for each chapter.

## PowerPoint® Lecture Slides

Helping make your lectures more engaging, these handy Microsoft® PowerPoint® slides outline the chapters of the main text in a classroom-ready presentation, making it easy for instructors to assemble, edit, publish, and present custom lectures.

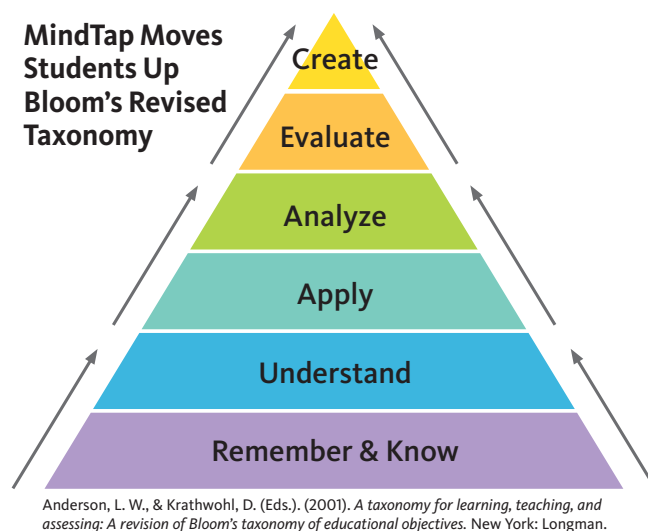
## Cognero

Cengage Learning Testing Powered by Cognero is an online system that allows you to author, edit, and manage test bank content from multiple Cengage Learning solutions; create multiple test versions in an instant; and deliver tests from your LMS, your classroom, or wherever you want.

## MindTap™: The Personal Learning Experience

MindTap for Gordon/Browne, *Beginning Essentials 3e* represents a new approach to teaching and learning. A highly personalized, fully customizable learning platform, MindTap helps students to elevate thinking by guiding them to:

- Know, remember, and understand concepts critical to becoming a great teacher;
- Apply concepts, create tools, and demonstrate performance and competency in key areas in the course;
- Prepare artifacts for the portfolio and eventual state licensure, to launch a successful teaching career; and
- Develop the habits to become a reflective practitioner.



As students move through each chapter's Learning Path, they engage in a scaffolded learning experience, designed to move them up Bloom's Taxonomy, from lower- to higher-order thinking skills. The Learning Path enables pre-service students to develop these skills and gain confidence by:

- Engaging them with chapter topics and activating their prior knowledge by watching and answering questions about TeachSource videos of teachers teaching and children learning in real classrooms;
- Checking their comprehension and understanding through *Did You Get It?* assessments, with varied question types that are autograded for instant feedback;
- Applying concepts through mini-case scenarios—students analyze typical teaching and learning situations and create a reasoned response to the issue(s) presented in the scenario; and
- Reflecting about and justifying the choices they made within the teaching scenario problem.

MindTap helps instructors facilitate better outcomes by evaluating how future teachers plan and teach lessons in ways that make content clear and help diverse students learn, assessing the effectiveness of their teaching practice, and adjusting teaching as needed. The Student Progress App makes grades visible in real time so students and instructors always have access to current standings in the class.

MindTap for Gordon/Browne, *Beginning Essentials 3e* helps instructors easily set their course since it integrates into the existing Learning Management System and saves instructors time by allowing them to fully customize any aspect of the Learning Path. Instructors can change the order of the student learning activities, hide activities they don't want for the course, and—most importantly—add any content they do want (e.g., YouTube videos, Google docs, links to state education standards). Learn more at [www.cengage.com/mindtap](http://www.cengage.com/mindtap).

## About the Authors

**Ann Miles Gordon** has been an early childhood professional for more than 45 years as a teacher of young children, a teacher of parents, and a teacher of college students. She has taught in laboratory schools, church-related centers, and private and public preschool and kindergarten programs. Ann taught at the Bing Nursery School, the laboratory school for Stanford University's Department of Psychology, where she was a head teacher and lecturer in the Psychology Department. Ann also served as an adjunct faculty member in several community colleges, teaching the full gamut of early childhood courses. Ann served as executive director of the National Association of Episcopal Schools for 14 years, where more than 1,100 early childhood programs were a part of her network. Ann is semi-retired and a hands-on grandmother of two,

through which she brings an enhanced perspective on center-based care and early elementary grades.

**Kathryn Williams Browne** has been teaching children, families, and students for more than 40 years. First a teacher of young children—nursery school, parent cooperative, full-day child care, pre-kindergarten, bilingual pre-school, kindergarten and first grade, she moved to Stanford University’s lab school, where she served as head teacher and psychology lecturer. Co-authoring with Ann was enhanced by Kate’s role as a parent; her consultant and school board experience offered perspectives into public policy and reform. Kate teaches in the California Community College system, directing the ECE/EDU Department and Early Childhood Mentor program, which offer the richness of a diverse student population coupled with the challenges of access and privilege that parallel those in the early education field itself. She is active in faculty both on campus and statewide,



and serves as an advocate on early learning issue, and the special challenges of diversity and professional of early childhood education guide her work.

Ann and Kate are also co-authors of *Early Childhood Field Experience: Learning to Teach Well* (Pearson, 2012); *Guiding Young Children in a Diverse Society*, and *Beginnings and Beyond: Foundations in Early Childhood Education*, 9th edition (Wadsworth/Cengage, 2014).

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Classroom teachers who provided Teacher Talks added an important dimension to this edition. We would like to thank Claudia Martin, Daniele Koenig, Teresa Campbell, Tracy Pierce, Michele McLaughlin, and Kathy Wilson, among several who shared their experience and insights.




# 1

## history and current issues of early childhood education

A photograph of two young children swinging happily on a swing set in a park. The child in the foreground is a girl with blonde pigtails, smiling broadly. The child behind her is a boy, also smiling and shouting with joy. The background is a soft-focus green landscape.

## Learning Outcomes

- 
- A red metal paperclip is attached to the top left corner of the paper.
- 1-1** Identify the historical roots of early childhood education (ECE).
  - 1-2** Examine the early childhood field and its evolution.
  - 1-3** Distinguish the major disciplines that influence the field.
  - 1-4** Investigate the major current issues involving ECE.

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### NAEYC Standards

The following NAEYC Standards For Early Childhood Professional Preparation are addressed in this chapter:

- Standard 1: Promoting Child Development and Learning
- Standard 2: Building Family and Community Relationships
- Standard 6: Becoming a Professional

## truth<sup>or</sup>fiction

- T F** The historical roots of early childhood education are primarily from the United States.
- T F** The core of the early childhood education field is nursery and preschool for young children.
- T F** The disciplines of Medicine and Psychology have major impacts on the field.
- T F** Family stressors such as work and poverty are eliminated by sending children to good early education programs.
- T F** Standards for teacher preparation are universal.

## 1-1 Historical Roots of Early Childhood Education

Early childhood education is a rich and exciting field. The story of its development is also the chronicle of courageous people who took steps toward improving children's lives. Critical events of the past have had a hand in shaping today's issues. As the conditions of childhood and early education have changed through the centuries, so have its educators adapted to those challenges.

There is more than one right way to educate young children. Every culture has had and still does have the task of socializing and educating their young. The historical record may document several educational philosophies, but there is no single monopoly on ideas about children. Other disciplines (medicine, education, and psychology) inform early childhood teaching, and current issues always influence what is happening for young children and their teachers. During the past 50 years, the field has evolved from being an option for middle-class preschool children to a necessity for millions of families with children from infancy through the primary years. Changes in education historically have been linked to social reform and upheaval as the importance of childhood and how we transmit values have signaled a new level of **professionalism** in early childhood education.

Because **early childhood** is the period of life from infancy through age 8 years of age, the term **early childhood education** refers to group settings deliberately intended to effect developmental changes in young children of those ages. Settings for infants and toddlers, preschoolers, and children kindergarten through grade three (sometimes all elementary grades) all require professionals who build bridges between a child's two worlds: school (or group experience) and home. It is during these years that the foundation for future learning is set; these are the *building-block years*, during which a child learns to walk, talk, establish an identity, make friends, print, and count. In later years, that same child builds on these skills to be able to ride a bike, speak a second language, learn to express and negotiate, write in cursive, and understand multiplication.

### 1-1a Influences from Abroad

It is impossible to pinpoint the origins of humankind because there are few records from millions of years ago. Some preparation for adult life was done informally, mostly

**professionalism.** The competence or skill expected of a professional; in early childhood education, this includes a sense of identity, purpose to engage in developmentally appropriate practices, a commitment to ethical teaching and to child advocacy, and participation in the work as a legitimate livelihood.

**early childhood.** The period of life from infancy through 8 years of age.

**early childhood education.** Education in the early years of life; the field of study that deals mainly with the learning and experiences of children from infancy through the primary years (up to approximately 8 years of age).

**universal education.** Education for all, regardless of race/ethnicity, culture, gender, status, sexual orientation, or religion.

through imitation. As language developed, communication occurred. Children learned dances, rituals, and ceremonies, and both boys and girls were taught skills for their respective roles in the tribe. Ancient historical documents seem to indicate that child-rearing practices were somewhat crude. Even the definition of *childhood* has varied greatly throughout history. For example, in ancient times, children were considered adults by 7 years of age; in middle-class America, children are supported into their early 20s.

A society's definition of childhood influences how it educates its children. In the Western world, during the Renaissance and Reformation, children were seen as either pure and good, all worthy of basic education, or as evil and carrying original sin, needing strict control and punishment. Once the printing press was created, parents were urged to educate their children by teaching them morals and catechism. At the same time, the call for a **universal education** began. Skilled craftsmen formed a kind of middle class, and by the 1500s, reading, writing, arithmetic, and bookkeeping were fairly common school subjects throughout Europe.

The pioneers of our field gave voice to both the dominant ideas about children and new views for the time period.

## Professionalism

### Why History?

Most early childhood education students and many educators know little about the origins of their chosen profession. To better inform your teaching practice, link the past to the present so that you will receive the following:

- **Support:** Works of Froebel, Montessori, and Dewey are part of the philosophical foundation on which our educational practices are built. Traditional early childhood practices reflect European values and beliefs. Looking beyond the dominant culture, oral and written records exist describing education in Africa and Asia. Focus on many cultures to broaden everyone's viewpoints.
- **Inspiration:** Knowing our deep roots helps develop professional expression. Ideas of past educators offer you more methods of teaching. An historical overview clarifies how children and learning are viewed based on the religious, political, and economic pressures.
- **Identity and commitment:** Each of us accepts the mission that is central to our field: We are committed to enhancing the education, development, and well-being of young children. We also recognize that it is a reflection of certain cultural norms. Be cautious of theories or opinions claiming to be "universal." For instance, history notes that schools of the past were overwhelmingly created for boys; this gender bias of past practices adds to the underdevelopment of girls and prevails today in parts of the world.

## Comenius

John Amos Comenius (1592–1670), a Czech educator, wrote the first picture book for children. Called *Orbis Pictus* (*The World of Pictures*, 1658), it was a guide for teachers that included training of the senses and the study of nature. Comenius believed that “in all the operations of nature, development is from within,” so children should be allowed to learn at their own pace and to learn by doing. Teachers should work with children’s own inclinations, for “what is natural takes place without compulsion.” This idea was later reflected in Montessori’s “sensitive periods.” Comenius encouraged parents to let their children play with other children of the same age. He also reflected the growing social reform that would educate the poor as well as the rich.

## Locke

An English philosopher, John Locke (1632–1714) is considered to be the founder of modern educational philosophy. He based his theory of education on the scientific method and the study of the mind and learning. Locke proposed the concept of **tabula rasa**, the belief that the child is born

neutral, rather than either good or evil, and is a “clean slate” on which the experiences of parents, society, education, and the world are written. Because Locke believed that the purpose of education is to make man a reasoning creature, a working knowledge of the Bible and a counting ability sufficient to conduct business was fundamental. Locke suggested that instruction should be pleasant, with playful activities as well as drills. He based his theory on the Scientific Method, used extensively in Behaviorist research, and was one of the first European educators to discuss the idea of individual differences gleaned from observing one child rather than simply teaching a group, later reflected in Piaget’s work.

## Rousseau

Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778), a writer and philosopher, believed that children were not inherently evil, but naturally good. He is best known for his book *Émile* (1761), in which he raised a hypothetical child to adulthood. Rousseau’s ideas were revolutionary for the times. They include the following:

- > The true object of education should not be primarily vocational.
- > Children really learn only from firsthand information.
- > Children’s view of the external world is quite different from that of adults.
- > There are distinct phases of development of a child’s mind that should coincide with the various stages of education.

Rousseau thought that the school atmosphere should be very flexible to meet the needs of children and insisted on using concrete teaching materials, leaving the abstract and symbolic for later years. Pestalozzi, Froebel, Montessori, and Dewey were greatly influenced by him, as were the theories of Piaget and Gesell.

## Pestalozzi

Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746–1827) was a Swiss educator whose principles focused on how to teach basic skills and the idea of “caring” as well as “educating” the child. Pestalozzi stressed the idea of the **integrated curriculum** that would develop the whole child; education was to be of the hand, the head, and the heart. He differed from Rousseau in that he proposed teaching children in groups rather than using a tutor with an individual child, blending Rousseau’s romantic ideals into a more egalitarian focus on skill building and independence. Pestalozzi’s works *How Gertrude Teaches Her Children* and *Book for Mothers* detailed some procedures for mothers to use at home with their children.



**Figure 1-1** *Orbis Pictus*, by John Comenius, is considered the first picture book written for children.

**tabula rasa.** A mind not affected yet by experiences, sensations, and the like. In John Locke’s theory, a child was born with this “clean slate” upon which all experiences were written.

**integrated curriculum.** A set of courses designed to form a whole; coordination of the various areas of study, making for continuous and harmonious learning.

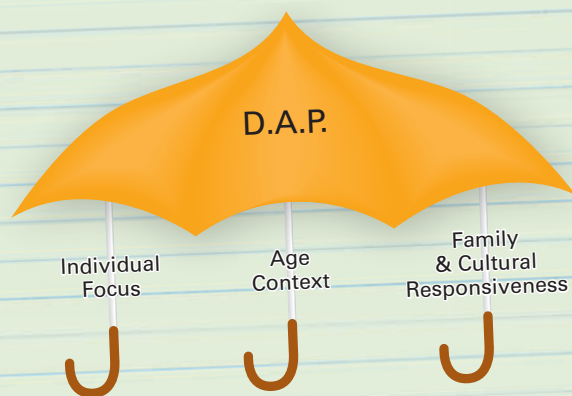
# DAP

## The Umbrella Unfolds

**Developmentally appropriate practice (DAP)** defines modern early childhood education. Yet DAP has its roots in history. See both as your read DAP's distinctive focus on the following three components:

- > **Age-appropriateness.** What is known about child development and learning informs professionals about age-related characteristics and skills. Rousseau, Montessori, Gesell, and Piaget all ascribed to the notion that the age of the child indicates basic abilities, outlooks, and behaviors.
- > **Individual appropriateness.** Every child is unique, with an individual set of personal traits and responses that adults should take into consideration when planning educational experiences for that child. Locke, Montessori, and the schools of Reggio Emilia all celebrate the primacy of the individual.
- > **Social and cultural responsiveness.** Children are members of a family, with language and cultural influences that affect who they are and how they might learn best. As children are exposed to a neighborhood, the media, and schooling, they remain rooted in their home values, expectations, and habits. Comenius, Froebel, and Dewey, as well as current best practices, recommend that early educational experiences be meaningful and relevant to children's lives.

Open the three-handled umbrella to ensure that you are “triple-hooked” to what is best for young children.



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## Froebel

Friedrich Wilhelm August Froebel (1782–1852) is known to us as the “father of the kindergarten” (from the German *kinder garten*, “children’s garden”). Froebel started his kindergarten in 1836, for children ages about 2 to 6 years, after he had studied with Pestalozzi in Switzerland and had read Comenius. In his book *Education of Man*, he wrote: “Play is the highest phase of child development—the representation of the inner necessity and impulse,” so his classroom included blocks, pets, and finger plays. He designed what we now think were the first educational toys, which he

**developmentally appropriate practices (DAP).** That which is suitable or fitting to the development of the child; refers to those teaching practices that are based on the observation and responsiveness to children as learners with developing abilities who differ from one another by rate of growth and individual differences, rather than of differing amounts of abilities. It also refers to learning experiences that are relevant to and respectful of the social and cultural aspects of the children and their families.

termed “gifts.” These objects demonstrated various attributes (such as color or size), were to be arranged in a special order that would assist the child’s development, and were later expanded on by Montessori.

Worldwide, teachers practice the Froebelian belief that a child’s first educational experiences should be a garden: full of pleasant discoveries and delightful adventure, where the adults’ role is to plant ideas and materials for children to use as they grow at their own pace.

## Montessori

At the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, Maria Montessori (1870–1952) became the first female physician in Italy. She worked in the slums of Rome with poor children and with mentally retarded children. Sensing that what they lacked was proper motivation and environment, she opened a preschool, *Casa di Bambini*, in 1907. Her first class was com-

posed of 50 children from 2 to 5 years of age. The children were at the center all day while their parents worked. They were fed two meals a day, given a bath, and provided medical attention. Montessori designed materials, classrooms, and a teaching procedure that proved her point to the astonishment of people all over Europe and America. After Montessori was introduced in the United States in 1909, her methods received poor reception and were often misunderstood. Today, most Montessori schools are private preschools and child care centers, although there are many that also serve elementary students, and a small (but growing) number of programs are for infants and toddlers. Montessori programs are explained in Chapter 2.

## Steiner

Rudolf Steiner (1861–1925) was a German educator whose method is known today as the Waldorf School of Education. This system has influenced mainstream education in Europe, and its international reputation is felt in American



The Art Archive/Alamy

Why were early kindergartens patterned after Froebel's idea that play was the highest form of development? ◀

early childhood programs today. Steiner theorized that childhood is a phase of life important in its own right. It has three periods: that of the “will” (0 to 7 years), the “heart,” or feelings (7 to 14 years), and the “head,” or a fusion of the spirit and the body (14 years on). Early childhood is the period of the will, and the environment must be carefully planned to protect and nurture the child. Self-discipline emerges from the child's natural willingness to learn and initiate, so adult role-model experiences in early childhood must be carefully selected. For instance, fairy stories help children acquire time-honored wisdom; modern Waldorf followers insist that television be eliminated. The Waldorf program model is described in Chapter 2.

### The McMillan Sisters

In the first three decades of the 20th century, the two McMillan sisters pioneered early education in England. Noticing the deplorable conditions in England for children younger than 5 years, Rachel and Margaret McMillan began a crusade for slum children. Health studies of the time showed that although 80% of London children were born in good health, by the time they entered school, only 20% could be classified that way. In 1910, the sisters set up a clinic in Deptford, a London slum area, which became an open-air nursery a year later. The McMillan sisters' regimen for their nursery school children of fresh air, sleep, and bathing proved successful. Although more than

A child's first educational experiences should be a garden: full of pleasant discoveries and delightful adventure, where the adults' role is to plant ideas and materials for children to use as they grow at their own pace.

700 children between 1 and 5 years of age died of measles in London in about a 6-month period in 1914, there was not one fatal case at Deptford School.

Margaret McMillan invented the name “nursery school.” She paid great attention to health: a daily inspection, the outdoor program, play, good food—what she called “nurture.” But she saw that an educational problem was also involved and she set to work to establish her own method of education for young children. This was why she called it a “school” (Hymes, 1978–79).

## 1-1b American Influences

### Colonial Days

The American educational system began in the colonies. The one-room schoolhouse was the mainstay of education in colonial New England. Children were sent to school primarily

## Diversity

### Non-Western Perspectives

Traditional early childhood educational practices reinforce European-American values and beliefs. But there are many ways to care for and educate children and nontraditional perspectives that influenced early childhood education.

- *China and Japan* were influenced by Confucius' writings (551–479 bc), which stressed harmony. Children were seen as good and worthy of respect, a view not held in Europe until later.
- *Native American* writings show close ties and interconnectedness not only among families and within tribes but also between people and nature. Teaching children about relationships and interconnectedness are historical themes of early education among many indigenous peoples.
- *Africans and African Americans* focus on strong **kinship networks**, in which people bond together and pool resources for the common good. These contemporary tendencies may come from ancient roots, historical oppression, modern injustice, or all three.
- *Hispanic and Latino* families model a goal of interdependence and learning to help others. In addition, common patterns of infant care include keeping a baby close and responding to crying quickly, which is an adaptive response to environmental hazards and concern for survival.

We must be careful in our assumptions of what we think is good or right for young children. A wider view of history reveals that there are many “right” ways, and much that is “good” comes from sharing our diverse viewpoints.

**kinship networks.** Groups formed when people bond together and pool resources for the common good.

for religious reasons. The Bible was used in school, as was the New England Primer and Horn Book. In the South, plantation owners imported tutors from England or opened small private schools to teach just their sons to read and write.

### Children in Enslavement

The first African Americans were indentured servants, whose repayment of their debts by servitude would buy them their freedom. By 1620, Africans were being brought to the so-called New World as slaves. Before the Civil War, education was severely limited for African Americans. Formal schools were scarce, and most education came through the establishment of “Sabbath schools.” As part of religious instruction, slaves were often provided literary training. However, many plantation owners found these schools threatening and banned them by making laws prohibiting the teaching of slaves. Another facility then developed, that of the “midnight school.” Because of its necessary secretive existence, few records are available, although it is reasonable to conclude that the curriculum was similar to that of the prohibited Sabbath schools.

After the Civil War, private and public schools were opened for African Americans. Major colleges and universities were founded by the end of the 1800s. Booker T. Washington, born into slavery, founded the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute in Alabama in 1881 and emphasized practical education and intercultural understanding between the races as a path to liberation. Many former slaves and graduates established schools for younger children.

### John Dewey

By the end of the 1800s, a nationwide reform movement had begun. The Progressive Movement (see section later in the chapter) received its direction primarily through one individual, John Dewey (1858–1952). Dewey was the first real native-born influence on education in the United States and had one of the greatest impacts on American education of all time. He believed that children were valuable and that childhood was an important part of their lives. Like Froebel, he felt that education should be integrated with life and should provide a training ground for cooperative living.

As did Pestalozzi and Rousseau, Dewey felt that schools should focus on the nature of the child. Dewey’s beliefs about children and learning are summarized in Figure 1-2.

### Patty Smith Hill

Patty Smith Hill (1868–1946) of Teacher’s College, Columbia University was an outstanding innovator of the time and one of the Progressive Movement’s most able leaders. It was she who wrote the song “Happy Birthday” and founded the National Association for Nursery Education, known today as the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Trained originally in the Froebelian tradition, she worked closely with G. Stanley Hall and later with John Dewey. She advocated free choice and a relevant curriculum. She expanded the Froebelian focus on small-motor work to include large-muscle equipment for climbing and construction. She also urged that kindergarten and first grade be merged so that both groups would have independent, creative activity before formal academic instruction.

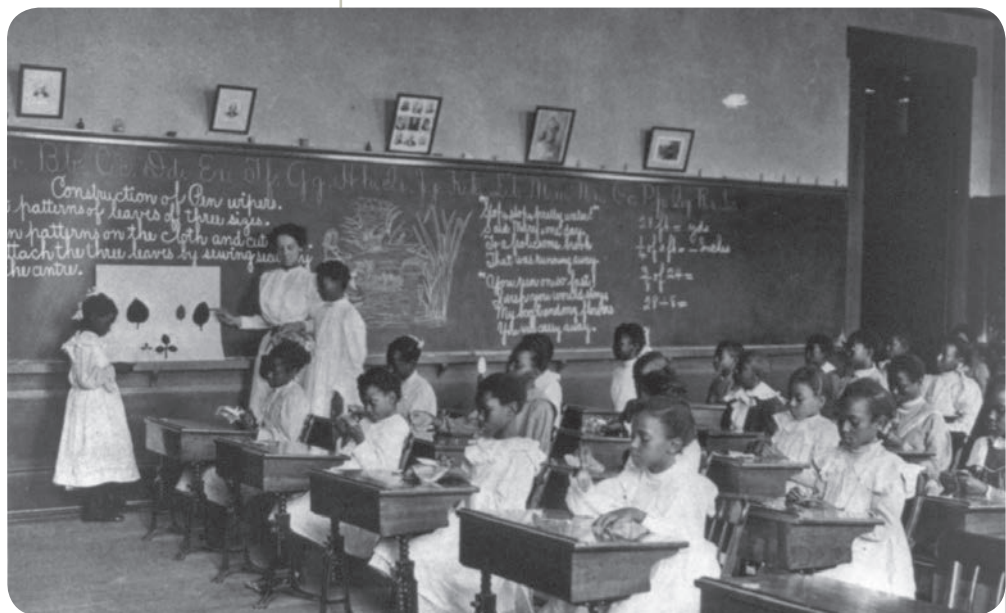
### Lucy Sprague Mitchell

Early childhood education in the United States grew out of Dewey’s progressive movement largely because of Lucy

## truth<sup>OR</sup>fiction?

**T F** The historical roots of early childhood education are primarily from the United States.

There are several European influences as well as non-Western perspectives that influence early childhood educational philosophy and practice.



Many graduates of Tuskegee and Hampton Institutes became teachers of African-American children of former slaves. ◀

Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C. [LC-USZ62-26378]

## Dewey's Creed

### Dewey's Creed

1. "I believe that only true education comes through the stimulation of the child's powers by the demands of the social situations in which he finds himself."

2. "The child's own instinct and powers furnish the material and give the starting point for all education."

3. "I believe that education, therefore, is a process of living and not a preparation for future living."

4. "I believe that . . . the school life should grow gradually out of the home life . . . it is the business of the school to deepen and extend . . . the child's sense of the values bound up in his home life."

### What It Means Today

Children learn to manage themselves in groups, to make and share friendships, to solve problems, and to cooperate.

We need to create a place that is child centered, a place that values the skills and interests of each child and each group.

Prepare the child for what is to come by enriching and interpreting the present to him. Find educational implications in everyday experiences.

Values established and created in the home should be enhanced by teaching in the schools.

**Figure 1-2** John Dewey believed that teachers are engaged in a dignified calling that included more than academic instruction; learning to live a social life was equally important, expressed in *My Pedagogic Creed* (Washington, DC: The Progressive Education Association, 1897). (With special thanks to Sheila Roper of the MacClintock Photo Collection, Special Collections, Morris Library, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale.)

Sprague Mitchell (1878–1967) and her contemporaries. Raised in an environment of educational and social reform, Mitchell developed the idea of schools as community centers as well as places for children to learn to think. She gathered together many talented people to build a laboratory

# truth<sup>or</sup>fiction?

**T F** The core of the field is nursery and pre-school for young children.

The traditional nursery school (preschool) exemplifies a developmental approach to learning where experiences are organized to meet all needs and serve children 2½ to 5 years of age.

school to implement and experiment with progressive principles, Bank Street College of Education to promote them, and a workshop for writers of children's literature. Mitchell became a major contributor to the idea of educational experiments, teacher-planned curriculum experiences that would then be observed and analyzed for children's reactions.

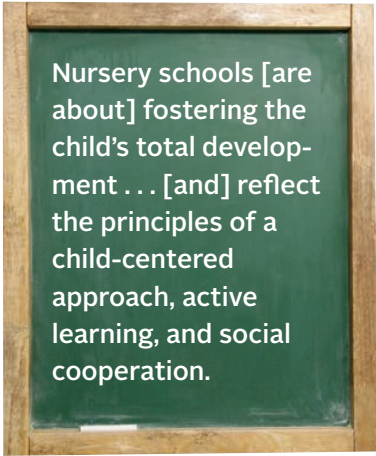
### Abigail Eliot

Abigail Eliot (1892–1992) is generally credited with bringing the nursery school movement to the United States. She had worked with the McMillan sisters in the slums of London. As a social worker in Boston, she had visited many day nurseries and recalled them as places with "dull green walls, no light colors, nothing pretty—spotlessly clean places, with rows of white-faced listless little children sitting, doing nothing" (Hymes, 1978–79). She founded the Ruggles Street Nursery School, teaching children and providing teacher training, and was the first director until it was incorporated into Tufts University to become the Eliot-Pearson Department of Child Study. Eliot became the first woman to receive a doctoral degree from Harvard University's Graduate School of Education, and after retiring from Tufts, she moved to California, where she helped establish Pacific Oaks College.

## 1-2 The Field and Its Evolution

### 1-2a Nursery School

The very phrase *nursery school* conjures up images of a child's nursery, a gentle place of play and growing. Coined to describe a place in which children were nurtured by the McMillans and Eliot, the nursery school took Dewey's philosophy to heart. By the 1920s and 1930s, early childhood education had reached a professional status in the United States. Nursery schools and day nurseries went beyond custodial health care, fostering the child's total development. Their schools reflected the principles of a **child-centered approach**, active learning, and social cooperation. The children were enrolled from middle- and upper-class homes as well as from working-class families. However, until the 1960s, nursery schools served few poor families. Nursery schools are considered the core of early childhood education (see "Teacher Talks" in this chapter and Chapter 2).



Nursery schools [are about] fostering the child's total development . . . [and] reflect the principles of a child-centered approach, active learning, and social cooperation.

**child-centered approach.** The manner of establishing educational experiences that takes into consideration children's ways of perceiving and learning; manner of organizing a classroom, schedule, and teaching methods with an eye toward the child's viewpoint.

Traditional nursery school is often called preschool. The developmental approach is influenced by the many early progressive thinkers in early childhood development, some being Pestalozzi, Froebel, Montessori, Dewey, Piaget and others. The main idea is to provide an environment for children to explore materials of their interest (free play) and have opportunities to develop social competence and emotional well-being. Katherine Read Baker best describes this in her classic book titled *The Nursery School: A Human Relationship Laboratory* (1950). She developed an educational model that focuses on the child's needs, growth patterns and relationships with others.

This approach encourages young children to express themselves through creativity, physical activity, language and intellectual skill. Typically, nursery/

preschools center on the child's social and emotional well-being which is why outdoor play also is a big part of the day. Outdoor play is developmentally appropriate because children are developing both fine and gross motor skills and they need the space to explore and develop these skills. Most have half-day schedules but many have extended days. These schools provide a variety of activities throughout the day including free choice indoors and outside, large and small muscle play, creative arts, social and dramatic play, building and construction with blocks and manipulative toys, and teacher-directed times.

The traditional Nursery school aligns with my values because I remember my nursery school vividly as my most enjoyable educational experience. When I went to elementary and middle school

from 1st grade to 7th grade, I remember noticing the big difference in attitude of my teachers. I was much more curious to learn while in an environment that was open and free for hands on activities, but then school became rigid and I felt like I was never good enough; it took away any curiosity to learn and sometimes I felt trapped in jail. When I was looking for a preschool for my children, and then for myself as a newly-educated ECE teacher, I took time to tour many schools. I found an amazing school, and later discovered that it only hires teachers with degrees in Early Child Development. It was remembering what I loved about nursery school when I was a child that helped me get there.

—Claudia

## Standards

### Spin-Offs from the Core

Nursery schools in the United States have served several purposes for the field of early childhood education. See how these spin-offs promote three key Standards:

- > **Standard 1:** Promoting Child Development and Learning. **Laboratory schools** attempted a multidisciplinary approach, blending the voices from psychology and education with those of home economics, nursing, social work, and medicine. Research centers and child development laboratories began in many colleges and universities from about 1915 to 1930. The Child Study Movement of the 1920s to 1960s is discussed later in this chapter. "The purpose was to improve nursery schools, and, therefore, we brought in the people who were studying children, who were learning more about them, so we could do a better job" (Hymes, 1978–79).
- > **Standard 2:** Building Family and Community Relationships. **Parent cooperative schools** promoted parent education as a vital function of early childhood programs. The first of these parent participation schools was developed in 1915 at the University of Chicago. Either part- or full-day programs, these are organized and run by parents, usually with a professional head teacher or director (see Chapter 2).
- > **Standard 6:** Becoming a Professional. By 1950, when Katherine Read (Baker) first published *The Nursery School: A Human Relationships Laboratory* (in its ninth printing and in seven languages), the emphasis of the nursery school was first on understanding human behavior, then on building programs, guidance techniques, and relationships accordingly. The nursery school was for children to learn as they played and shared experiences with others. It was also where adults could learn about child development and human relationships by observing and participating.

## 1-2b Kindergarten

The word **kindergarten** is a delightful term, bringing to mind the image of young seedlings on the verge of blossoming. The first kindergarten was a German school started by Froebel in 1837. In 1856, Margarethe Schurz, a student of Froebel's, opened the first kindergarten in the United States and inspired Elizabeth Peabody (1804–1894) of Boston to open the first English-speaking kindergarten there in 1860. In 1873, Susan Blow (1843–1916) opened the first public school kindergarten in the United States.

Looking at the kindergarten in historical perspective, it is interesting to trace its various purposes. During the initial period (1856–1890), Froebel's philosophy was the mainstay of kindergarten education. At the same time, charity kindergartens

emerged as instruments of social reform where teachers conducted a morning class for about 15 children and made social (and welfare) calls on families during the afternoon. By early 1900, traditional kindergarten ideas were influenced by a scientific approach to education and by Dewey's notion of school-as-community. In an era of rising social conscience in the 1960s, helping the less fortunate became a "cause," much like the conditions that led to the creation of Head Start. The 1970s saw a focus on intellectual development and a programmatic shift that placed more emphasis on academic goals for the 5-year-old. In the 1990s, the concept of developmentally appropriate practices, or DAP, advocated more holistic, broad planning for kindergarten, as well as cultural and family responsiveness. Currently, standards and teacher-directed instruction are again on the rise; thus, kindergarten is the stage for a clash between developmental play and academic preparation. The kindergarten is found in some form in nearly every country of the world. Although the content of the program and the length of the day vary widely in the United States, kindergarten is available in every one of the states. The program model is described in Chapter 2.



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## 1-2c Programs with a Message

### Child Care

**Child care** is not a modern phenomenon. Some of the first nursery schools in England operated from 8:00 am until 4:00 or 5:00 pm; the McMillan's Deptford School was full-day. By definition, a full-day child care program is a place for children who need care for a greater portion of the day than the traditional nursery school offers. A full-day option is also educational. Much of the curriculum of a good full-day program will echo the quality of the traditional nursery school or preschool.

Although the economic crisis of the Depression and the political turmoil of World War II diverted attention from children's needs, both gave focus to adult needs for work. Out of this necessity came the nurseries run by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) in the 1930s and the Lanham Act nurseries of the 1940s. The most renowned program of mid-century was the Kaiser Child Care Centers. Today, child care is a full-day experience for children from 0 to 5 years (and older as extended care) to help working families, and it is provided either in homes or centers (see Chapter 2).

### Equal Rights

In the 1900s, gaining access to high-quality education for poor people and people of color was difficult. As Du Bois (1903 [1995]) wrote, "[T]he majority of Negro children in the United States, from 6 to 18, do not have the opportunity to read and write. . . . [E]ven in the towns and cities of the South, the Negro schools are so crowded and ill-equipped that no thorough teaching is possible." Only a legal challenge to segregation offered new focus, struggle, and ultimately improvement for African American children. The movement for equality came under black leadership, embraced unprecedented numbers of African Americans, and became national in scope. A persistent black initiative forced a reformulation of public policies in education. Finally, the historic case of *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* (1954) overturned the concept of "separate but equal." The Civil Rights Act of 1964 continued the struggle for equality of opportunity and education and attempted to address continuing **racist** attitudes and behavior.

### Head Start

A small piece of metal made its worldwide debut and jolted American education. Sputnik, the Soviet satellite, was successfully launched in 1957, causing mainstream America to ask: Why weren't we first in space? What is wrong with our schools? The emphasis in education quickly settled on engineering, science, and math in the hope of catching up with Soviet technology.

As the Civil Rights struggle soon followed, it became clear that education was a major stumbling block to equality of all people. It was time to act, and Project Head Start was conceived as education's place in the "war on poverty." Froebelian and Montessori goals formed the basis of Head Start, helping disadvantaged preschool children. This was a revolution in U.S. education, the first large-scale effort by the government to focus on children of poverty.

Project Head Start began in 1965 as a demonstration program aimed at providing educational, social, medical, dental, nutritional, and mental health services to preschool children from a diverse population of low-income families.

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**laboratory schools.** Educational settings whose purposes include experimental study; schools for testing and analysis of educational and/or psychological theory and practice, with an opportunity for experimentation, observation, and practice.

**parent cooperative schools.** An educational setting organized by parents for their young children, often with parental control and/or support in the operation of the program itself.

**kindergarten.** A school or class for children 4-to 6-years-old; in the United States, kindergarten is either the first year of formal, public school or the year of schooling before first grade.

**child care.** The care, education, and supervision of another's child, especially in an organized center or home dedicated to the enterprise; usually denotes full-day services.

**racist.** Attitudes, behavior, or policies that imply either a hatred or intolerance of other race(s) or involving the idea that one's own race is superior and has the right to rule or dominate others.

## Early Childhood Education in the Shipyards

Kaiser Child Care was an excellent model operated from 1943 to 1945 in Portland, Oregon. It became the world's largest children's facility and functioned around the clock all year long. The centers were operated by the shipyards, not by the public schools or community agencies, with the cost borne by the Kaiser Company and by parents using the service. The center was at the entrance to the two shipyards, and available on site were an infirmary for both mothers and children and hot meals for mothers to take home when they picked up their children. These centers served 3811 children. After the war ended, mothers returned to the home; child care was no longer needed, and the centers closed.



Kaiser Shipyard operated a model child care center during World War II.

Genevieve Naylor/Historical/Cortis

extended their knowledge to the areas of child rearing and education.

### Maria Montessori

Maria Montessori (1870–1952) was the first woman in Italy ever granted a medical degree. She began studying children's diseases; through her work with mentally defective children, she found education more appealing.

### Sigmund Freud

Sigmund Freud (1856–1939) made important contributions to all modern thinking. The father of *psychodynamic personality theory*, he drastically changed how we look at childhood. Freud reinforced two specific ideas: (1) people are influenced by their early life in fundamental and dramatic ways, and (2) early experiences shape the way people live and behave as adults. Although he was

not involved directly in education, Freud and psychoanalytic theory influenced education greatly (see Chapter 4).

### Arnold Gesell

Arnold Gesell (1880–1961) was a physician who was concerned with growth from a medical point of view. Gesell began studying child development when he was a student of G. Stanley Hall, and later established the Clinic of Child Development at Yale University, where the data he collected with his colleagues became the basis of the recognized norms of how children grow and develop. He was also instrumental in encouraging Abigail Eliot to study with the McMillan sisters in England.

Gesell's greatest contribution was in guides from his maturation theory, best known today as "ages & stages" (see Chapters 3 and 4).

### Benjamin Spock

Benjamin Spock's book *Baby and Child Care* was a mainstay for parents in the 1940s and 1950s. In a detailed "how-to" format, Dr. Spock (1903–1998) preached a commonsense approach, and the book has sold 50 million copies around the world in 42 languages. Spock saw himself as giving practical application to the theories of Dewey and Freud, particularly the idea that children can learn to

Its mission was defined as **compensatory education** with parent involvement and community control. In 1972, it was transformed into a predominantly part-day, full-year program that includes children with special needs, and has been a major part of the U.S. federal commitment to early learning (see Chapter 2).

## 1-3 Interdisciplinary Influences

Several professions enrich the heritage of early childhood. This relationship has been apparent since the first nursery schools began, drawing from six different professions to create their practice: social work, home economics, nursing, psychology, education, and medicine. Three of the most consistent and influential of those disciplines are medicine, education, and psychology.

### 1-3a Medicine

The medical field has contributed to the study of child growth through the work of several physicians. These doctors became interested in child development and

**compensatory education.** Education designed to supply what is thought to be lacking or missing in children's experiences or ordinary environments.

direct themselves, rather than needing to be constantly disciplined. He suggested that parents “child-proof” their homes—a radical thought at the time. Some people associated permissiveness (as it relates to child rearing) with Spock’s methods, although Spock himself described his advice as relaxed and sensible while still advocating firm parental leadership.

### T. Berry Brazelton

Dr. T. Berry Brazelton (1918– ) is a well-known pediatrician who supports and understands the development of infants and toddlers. He developed an evaluation tool called the Neonatal Behavior Assessment Scale (also known as “the Brazelton”) to assess newborns. Cofounder of the Children’s Hospital Unit in Boston, professor emeritus of pediatrics at Harvard Medical School, and founder of the Brazelton Touchpoints Center, he is well known for his pediatric guides for parents (Touchpoints). His writings speak to the parents’ side of child rearing, although he also reminds parents how teachers can help them. Brazelton advocated for a national parental-leave standard, is involved in a federal lobbying group known as Parent Action, and hosted the cable TV series, *What Every Baby Knows*.

## 1-3b Education

Early childhood is one part of the larger professional field of education, which includes elementary, secondary, and college or postsecondary schools. Along with Dewey, the McMillan Sisters, Steiner, and Eliot, several other influential figures from this field bear attention.

### Susan Isaacs

Susan Isaacs (1885–1948) was an educator of the early 20th century whose influence on nursery and progressive schools of the day was substantial. In 1929, she published *The Nursery Years*, interpreting Freudian theory for teachers and providing guidance for how schools could apply this new knowledge of the unconscious to the education of children. She wanted children to have the opportunity for free, unhindered imaginative play not only as a means to discover the world but also as a way to work through wishes, fears, and fantasies. The teacher’s role was different from that of a therapist, she asserted, in that teachers were “to attract mainly the forces of love, to be the good but regulating parent, to give opportunity to express aggression but in modified form” (Biber, 1984).

### The Progressive Education Movement

As indicated earlier in reference to John Dewey, it was the Progressive Movement of the late 1800s and first half of the 20th century that changed the course of education in both elementary and nursery schools in America. Coinciding with the political progressivism in this country, this philosophy emphasized a child-centered approach that gained advocates from both the scientific viewpoint, such as G. Stanley Hall and John Dewey, and a psychoanalytic bent, such as Susan Isaacs and Patty Smith Hill.

A new kind of school emerged from these ideals. Movable furniture replaced rows of benches. Children’s projects, some still under construction, were found everywhere. The curriculum of the school began to focus on all of the basics, not just a few of the academics. If a group of 6-year-olds decided to make a woodworking table, they would first have to learn to read to understand the directions. After calculating the cost, they would purchase the materials. In building the table, geometry, physics, and math were learned along the way. This was a group effort that encouraged children to work together in teams, so school became a society in miniature. Children’s social skills were developed along with reading, science, and math. The teacher’s role in the process was one of ongoing support, involvement, and encouragement.

### The Schools of Reggio Emilia

In the last quarter-century, an educational system in Italy has influenced early childhood thinking. Loris Malaguzzi (1920–1994) developed his theory of early childhood education from his work with infants, toddlers, and preschoolers as the founder and director of early education in the town of Reggio Emilia, Italy. His philosophy includes creating an amiable school that welcomes families and the community and invites relationships among teachers, children, and parents to intensify and deepen in order to strengthen a child’s sense of identity. Reggio Emilia has attracted the attention and interest of American educators because of its respect for children’s work and creativity, its project approach, and its total community support.

## 1-3c Psychology

The roots of early childhood education are wonderfully diverse, but one tap root is especially deep: the connection with the field of psychology. In the past 100 years, the study of people and their behavior has been linked with the study of children and their growth.

### The Child Study Movement

The Child Study movement of the 1920s and 1930s gave education and psychology a common focus. Besides the Gesell Institute, many research centers and child development laboratories were established at colleges and universities around the country. Early ones include Hampton Institute in 1873; the University of Chicago, founded by John Dewey in 1896; Bank Street School in 1919; and the laboratory nursery school at Columbia Teacher’s College in 1921. Bing Nursery School at Stanford University and the Harold Jones Center of the University of California at Berkeley were founded after World War II, joining Pacific Oaks College on the West Coast. Their inception reflected the interest of several disciplines in the growth of the young child.

- Schools of psychology looked for children to observe and study.
- Schools of education sought demonstration schools for their teachers-in-training.

## Professionalism

### How Progressive Are YOU?

Check yourself against the major features of the educational progressive philosophy, then decide: How progressive an educator am I?

\_\_\_ We must recognize individual needs and individual differences in children.

\_\_\_ Teachers must be more attentive to the needs of children.

\_\_\_ Children learn best when they are highly motivated and have a genuine interest in the material.

\_\_\_ Learning via rote memory is useless to children.

\_\_\_ The teacher should be aware of the child's total development—social, physical, intellectual, and emotional.

\_\_\_ Children learn best when they have direct contact with the material.

If you checked fewer than two, you have a conservative approach. Three or four checks mean that you are somewhat progressive, and five or more put you alongside Dewey!

- Schools of home economics wanted their students to have firsthand experiences with children.
- On-campus schools provided early education children of student, staff, and faculty children.

This period of educational experimentation and child study led to an impressive collection of normative data by which we still measure ranges of ordinary development. It was the impetus in the United States that began the search for the most appropriate means of educating young children.

### Developmental and Learning Theories

There is no one theory or name that encompasses all of developmental psychology. Many theories have affected how we see young children and early education: psychodynamic, behaviorist, cognitive, maturation, humanist, sociocultural, and multiple intelligences. In the last 25 years, neuroscience and brain-based research has expanded our knowledge of how children grow and learn. New developments give us in-depth understanding of human functioning that has profound implications for children and learning (see Chapter 4).

## What Is Neuroscience and Why Should We Care?

### Brain Research says

When the field of psychology began to develop in the 1800s, new questions began to surface about the brain and the mind. Freud's ideas about the subconscious mind, Piaget's concepts of the thinking mind, and behaviorists' work on changing thoughts and attitudes via shaping behavior all led to the emergence of cognitive science in the late 1980s. A landmark report by the National Academy of Sciences entitled *From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development* (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000) joined early childhood education with neuroscience. Since then, the development and availability of brain-imaging techniques provide glimpses of brain activity as an individual thinks and feels.

We are now in what might be called the “century of the brain.” If the human brain is like the hardware of a computer, the mind may be seen as the software. Further, this software changes as it is used; people assign

different meaning to the inputs and outputs of things. Brain structures can now be mapped on a matrix. The work of cognitive neuropsychologists allows us to link specific regions of the brain with specific cognitive processes such as verbal and memory skills, attention, emotional responding, and motor coordination. Experimental techniques used on animals (that could not be ethically used with humans) have revealed the brain regions that connect with psychological processes. Combining computed tomography (CT) and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) developed during the late 20th century with the more recent functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) and positron emission topography (PET) allows us to determine the location of tumors or lesions as well as study the genetic basis of differences (Byrnes, 2001; Ansari & Coch, 2008).

The new frontier of neuroscience is showing us the remarkable plasticity of

the brain, as well as the critical nature of the early years. “Early experiences determine whether a child's developing brain architecture provides a strong or weak foundation for all future learning, behavior and health” (CDC/Harvard, 2007). Neuroscience and education create an ideal partnership in outlining a better understanding of how we learn so we can create more effective teaching methods and curriculum (Carew & Magsamen, 2010; Dubinsky, et al, 2013).

#### Questions

1. If this is the “century of the brain,” what do you think will change in educational practices?
2. What do you think parents should know about brain development in the first five years of a child's life?
3. What would “investing in young children” look like in your community? In your state?

## 1-4 Issues of Today

The themes of early childhood education continue to influence practices and policies of today. For instance, by the year 2000, 48% of the nation's schoolchildren were children of color (CDF, 2011). Nearly one in 10 ten Americans was born elsewhere; 10% of residents in the United States are immigrants. The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, changed the way Americans view the world and in turn are seen by it. Events and circumstances are reflected in the major issues facing early childhood educators today:

1. Ethic of social reform: quality child care, no child left behind legislation, and developmentally appropriate practices
2. Importance of childhood: family pressures and children's health risks
3. Transmission of values: the **media culture** and social diversity
4. Professionalism: children's programs, standards for teacher preparation, ethics in early care and education, and advocacy

## truth<sup>or</sup>fiction?

**T F** Medicine and psychology have major impacts on the field.

From Montessori to Brazelton in medicine and from child development to brain-based research in psychology, many ideas have influenced how we understand young children.

### 1-4a Ethic of Social Reform

This first theme dictates that schooling for young children will lead to social change and improvement. Montessori, the McMillans, Patty Smith Hill, Abigail Eliot, and Head Start all tried to improve children's health and physical well-being by attending first to the physical and social welfare aspects of children's lives. Today, the ethic of social reform refers to an expectation that education has the potential for significant social change and improvement. This is dramatically demonstrated in three current issues: quality child care, No Child Left Behind legislation, and developmentally appropriate practices (DAP).

#### Quality Child Care

Child care is part of a modern way of life; each day, more than 20 million children spend time in early care and education settings, which constitutes 63.5% of the 3- to 5-year-olds enrolled in center-based or out-of-home care (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). More than 67% of mothers are in the workforce (CDF, 2011). Without question, the need for child care has been firmly established.

The key word is *quality*—the terms “good quality” and “high quality” identify specific features in early childhood programs. Quality early care and education contribute to the healthy cognitive, social, and emotional development of all children, but particularly those from low-income families. Yet data from the CDF (2011) paint a bleak picture for those who might benefit the most. Child care costs are disproportionately high for poor parents and can equal as much as one third of their income. Good, affordable, accessible child care that will meet the increasing needs of American families is one of today's most crucial issues.

**Quality** is a function of group size, low teacher-to-child ratios, trained and experienced staff, adequate compensation, and safe and stimulating environments (see Chapter 2).

### No Child Left Behind, Race to the Top, & Common Core State Standards

One of the primary functions of the public school system in the United States is to prepare students for productive roles in society. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 was authorized to close the achievement gap between disadvantaged/minority students and their middle-class/white peers (U.S. Department of Education, 2001). Since then, a national education problem has been identified and a sense of urgency instilled in the public mind

The **No Child Left Behind (NCLB)** Act was part of the first wave of reforms in the 1980s.

Virtually every state enacted reform measures of some kind, with a focus on higher standards of student performance through the upgrading of curricula, increased requirements for homework, and firmer disciplinary

## Professionalism

### A Notable Portrait

Marian Wright Edelman is an outstanding children's advocate. Edelman began her career as a civil rights lawyer (the first African American woman to be admitted to the Mississippi state bar). By the 1960s she had dedicated herself to the battle against poverty, founding a public interest law firm that eventually became the Children's Defense Fund (CDF). “[We] seek to ensure that no child is left behind and that every child has a Healthy Start, a Head Start, a Fair Start, a Safe Start, and a Moral Start in life with the support of caring parents and communities” (CDF, 2008). To find out more about Edelman, go to [www.childrensdefense.org](http://www.childrensdefense.org).

**media culture.** The term used to describe the behaviors and beliefs characteristic of those who engage regularly with various media such as television, computers, and video games.

**quality.** A function of group size, low teacher-child ratios, trained and experienced staff, adequate compensation, and safe and stimulating environments.

methods. Most notable was the move to standards-based instruction and the requirement that children be tested twice a year to measure progress. In 1989, “Ready to Learn” was published, which included the provision that all children would have equal access to high-quality and developmentally appropriate preschool programs that help prepare children for school. In 2002, the ESEA was reauthorized with stronger goals, and by 2005, it had become the NCLB Act.

**Race to the Top** was a competitive grant program created in 2009 by the Obama Administration for states to create and adopt common academic standards for kindergarten through twelfth grade. It included an Early Learning Challenge designed to award funds to those states committed to increase the number of children at risk enrolled in high quality learning programs. The continuing challenge for states was to close the school readiness gap in which at children of poverty, disproportionately children of color, enter kindergarten underprepared to succeed. The larger the gap, the more difficult it is to achieve equality of achievement in later schooling.

**Common Core State Standards (CCSS)** have been developed in mathematics and language arts and adopted by nearly all 50 states to identify the knowledge and skills students need for college and work. These standards challenge all school districts, particularly those with both a school readiness gap and later achievement disparities. CCSS outlines all developmental domains, focuses attention on how children learn, and requires observations and assessments to measure student proficiency.

## Developmentally Appropriate Practices

The first definitive position on developmentally appropriate practices was adopted by the NAEYC in 1986. This was followed by expansions to include specifics for programs serving children from birth through age 8 years, outlining both appropriate and inappropriate practices (Bredekamp, 1987). Several key organizations followed suit: the Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI), the National Association of Elementary School Principals and the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) elaborated on their own standards in 1988–91. *Reaching Potentials: Transforming Early Childhood Curriculum and Assessment* (Bredekamp & Rosegrant) was published in 1995, and *Making Early Learning Standards Come Alive* (Gronlund) in 2006.

Open the DAP Umbrella on page 6 as you contemplate how DAP was being applied and discussed throughout the broader early childhood education community. Derived from the changing knowledge base by way of research and extended conversations among professionals, the first major revision of the NAEYC position statement and guidelines was published in 1997, with the 3rd edition in 2009 (Copple & Bredekamp, Eds). Tune into regular revisions as our knowledge base (such as brain research) and awareness of issues (as in special needs, English language learners) expand. DAP is applied throughout the book and discussed at length in Chapter 2.

## 1-4b Importance of Childhood

The second theme is the importance and uniqueness of childhood. The child holds a special place in the life span; families and society who value children take responsibility for providing a quality life for them. Two issues of today endanger childhood and demand our attention: family stressors and risks to children’s health.

### Family Stressors

Families encounter many challenges today. The impact of social changes in the past three decades has been hard felt by children and the adults who are raising them. Family structures vary greatly, but the task remains the same: to provide safety and stability, routine, and new experiences. Three stressors that make this task challenging are divorce, work, and poverty.

## DAP

### Is It DAP?

Look at the major provisions of the NCLB Act pertaining to early learning and the field’s response. Do you think the NCLB Act is DAP?

Provision	Description	ECE Response
<b>Adequate yearly progress</b>	Children will be assessed in reading and math (and a third area by state choice) beginning in third grade.	<i>The trickle down of inappropriate testing or imbalanced curriculum to younger children is a valid concern of early educators.</i>
<b>Highly qualified teachers</b>	All teachers in core academic subjects must have a B.A. degree, be fully certified, and be highly qualified (by state definition) in their areas of teaching assignment.	<i>The early learning field, plagued by high turnover and low pay, cannot meet these standards without significantly more funding.</i>
<b>Reading/literacy</b>	There are significantly increased funds aimed at having all children achieve reading proficiency by grade three.	<i>An early childhood concern is that other critical domains of childhood development will be undervalued or overlooked altogether.</i>

It remains to be seen how this ambitious plan will fare over the coming years and how it will relate to the national child care crisis. If we want all our children to be ready for school, we must improve the quality of child care experiences available to all.

TeachSource Digital Download

**literacy.** The quality or state of being able to read and write.

**Divorce.** Perhaps no one single change has affected children as much as the divorce rate. Children rate divorce second only to death of a parent as the most stressful event in their lives (DelCampo & DelCampo, 2006), and nearly 50% of marriages end in divorce, with just over 60% of American children living in married-couple households (Casey Foundation, 2008). You will likely notice some of these effects:

Effect	Reactions
Predivorce family	<b>Children:</b> Increased impulsive /aggressive behavior
Stress	<b>Parents:</b> headaches, fatigue, mood swings, depression
Parent Separation	<b>Children:</b> strong reaction, crying, fighting, withdrawal
Divorce	<b>Children:</b> adrift, clingy to teachers <b>Parents:</b> overworked, overwhelmed, preoccupied
Aftermath	<b>Parents:</b> mothers drastic drop in income, fathers diminished commitment

“Divorce introduces a massive change into the life of a boy or a girl no matter what the age,” (Pickhardt , 2011). Those specializing in divorce for children and adolescents note a cumulative effect over time, and yet see children as amazingly resilient with appropriate support. The age and gender of the children involved seem to have some bearing on their adjustment, both for 2- to 6-year-olds and for boys. The dependent young child may have a short-term reaction of anxiety, with regression and efforts to bring the parent close; clinging at separation and loss of self-help skills are difficult but temporary. The parents’ ability to be caring and available makes a difference, as does the parents’ relationship with each other and the quality of the children’s relationship with both parents.

**Work.** More than two thirds of children 6 to 12 years of age in the United States have all available parents in the workforce, and the same is true of 65% of children younger than 6 years (CDF, 2010). The implications for families are considerable. For women, the double roles of job/career and family nurturer can be overwhelming, creating great conflict and the stress of chronic fatigue. Many men are learning about greater involvement in child rearing and how to adjust to a new financial role. Yet there are vast differences among the various cultural groups and individual adults about the value of and care for children. For both parents, three issues loom large:

- *Concern for good child care.* In many communities, full- or flexible-time child care is unavailable or unaffordable.
- *Struggle to provide “quality time” with children and as a family unit.*
- European models of family leave give parents several months of unpaid leave from their jobs to be at home



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Who make up today’s families? Family structures you are likely to encounter in your program include single- and dual-parents, grandparents and teens raising children, and blended families raising children together. ◀

and establish a bond and family setting. Once back on the job, working parents are less available for direct participation in a classroom and become less involved in their children’s education.

- *Financial burden.* Without parental leave, many parents are forced to return to work during the critical early months of infancy or lose income and even their jobs. In the United States, child tax credits and pretax dependent care credits are government and employer supports.

## Ethics

### What Can You Do About a Family Divorce?

Our Code of Ethical Conduct commits us to “recognizing that children are best understood and supported in the context of family. So what can a teacher do when a family goes through divorce?

- > Help parents get access to outside help, such as a parent support group, community welfare services, or a parental stress hotline.
  - > Plan strategies for family involvement that take into account the work demands, resources, and expertise of parents.
  - > Provide time to heal and let your place care be a safe haven to heal.
  - > Know and watch your children, and talk about feelings.
  - > Find ways for creative self-expression.
  - > Use books to connect with children.
  - > Communicate openly with family members.
- We cannot prevent divorce or separation, but we can support children in the context of their family situation, whatever that may be.

Despite economic downturns, we look toward a future trend of U.S. policies that make it more attractive for working adults to spend time with children.

**Poverty.** The children who are at risk for academic failure are likely to be those who live in poverty, members of minority groups in racial isolation, children with various physical and mental disabilities, children with limited English proficiency, and children from single-parent families (Casey Foundation, 2008). For every five children

## truth or fiction?

**T F** Family stressors such as work and poverty are eliminated by sending children to good early education programs.

Quality early childhood programs can educate children and support families, but they cannot solve all the economic and social problems of society or eliminate all family stressors.

**child abuse.** Violence in the form of physical maltreatment, abusive language, and sexual harassment or misuse of children.

**child neglect.** The act or situation of parents' or other adults' inattention to a child's basic health needs of adequate food, clothing, shelter, and health care; child neglect may also include not noticing a child or not paying enough attention in general.

in the United States, one child is poor (CDF, 2008). Most poor children live in families with working parents whose wages are too low for them to earn their way out of poverty. Children who start out at a disadvantage fall further behind in academic achievement throughout their school years. Too many of them reach adulthood unhealthy, illiterate, and unemployable, with limited participation in the social, political, and economic mainstream of national life. This is a personal tragedy for everyone involved and one that calls for intensive reform efforts.

### Children's Health Risks

Challenges to positive child health come in several forms. Child abuse and neglect, childhood obesity, and violence/disaster all put children's basic health at risk.

**Child Abuse and Neglect.** **Child abuse** and **child neglect** are significant problems in this country. One third of all victims are children younger than four (Children's Defense Fund, 2012), and one third of abused and neglected children eventually victimize their own children, perpetuating the cycle (Childhelp, 2012).

A neglected child may be one whose waking hours are mostly unsupervised by adults, in front of the television or simply unconnected with—and unnoticed by—parents or an important caregiver. Child neglect takes more hazardous forms when the basic needs of adequate food, clothing, shelter, and health are unmet. Because families with children represent more than one third of the homeless population and the foster care system is strained, many children are on the move and under great strain and pressure. More than 70 % of the reported child abuse in the United States is for neglect, 16 % is physical abuse, and 9 % is sexual abuse (CDF, 2010).

Children who experience abuse and neglect have a 59 percent chance of being arrested as a juvenile and are 25 percent more likely to become pregnant as a teenager.

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#### Problem Area

#### Signs and Signals (Childhelp, 2012)

##### Neglect

Unsuitable clothing for weather, dirty or unbathed, extreme hunger, apparent lack of supervision

##### Physical abuse

Unexplained burns, cuts, bruises, or welts in the shape of an object; bite marks; antisocial behavior; problems in school; fear of adults

##### Emotional abuse

Apathy, depression, hostility, lack of concentration, eating disorders

##### Sexual abuse

Inappropriate interest or knowledge of sexual acts; nightmares and bedwetting; drastic changes in appetite; overcompliance or excessive aggression; fear of a particular adult or family member

Reporting suspected child abuse is mandated by law in all states (see Ethics box). The residual effects of child abuse—which occurs in every socioeconomic, ethnic, religious and educational level—are dramatic. Children who experience abuse and neglect have a 60 % chance of being arrested as juveniles and are 25 % more likely to become pregnant as teenagers (Childhelp, 2012).

**Child Obesity.** Childhood obesity has increased alarmingly in the past decade. According to the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS, 2011), the prevalence of childhood obesity among children ages 2 to 4 years has increased from 5% in 1980 to 14% in 2009, and in children 6 to 11, there is an even greater increase to over 19.6% of children and teens deemed overweight or obese. Health risks include heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, depression, and low self-esteem. Part of the problem is that children are less active on a daily basis than in previous generations; other factors include inadequate access to nutritious food and poor eating habits. The Obesity Society (2010; see Web Resources) notes:

In the past 30 years, the occurrence of overweight in children has doubled and it is now estimated that one in five children in the US is overweight. Increases in the prevalence of overweight are also being seen in younger children, including preschoolers. Prevalence of overweight is especially

### Developmentally Appropriate Practices for Preschool Movement Programs

1. Toddlers should participate in at least 30 minutes a day of structured play and one to several hours a day of unstructured physical activity. Preschoolers should participate in at least one hour of daily structured physical activity.
2. Preschoolers should not be sedentary for more than one hour at a time and be engaged in unstructured physical activity whenever possible.
3. Basic movement skills should be the building blocks for more complex movement abilities.
4. Indoor and outdoor environments should exceed recommended safety standards for performing large-muscle, gross-motor activities.
5. Teachers and caregivers should understand the importance of physical activity and integrate movement programs as part of the daily educational program.
6. Teachers serve as facilitators, encouraging children to explore and discover a range of movement possibilities.

**Figure 1-3** From *Appropriate practices in movement programs for young children, Ages 3–5*. The Council on Physical Education for Children (Reston, VA: A position statement of the National Association for Sport and Physical Education/NASPE, 2000, pages 8–9, 11, 15, 17) and Sanders, S. W. (2002). *Active for life: Developmentally appropriate movement programs for young children*. (Washington, DC: The National Association for the Education of Young Children).

higher among certain populations such as Hispanic, African American and Native Americans.

Moreover, if one parent is obese, the child is three times more likely to be obese in adulthood; if both parents are obese, the risk is 10 times more likely that the child will be an obese adult. Childhood overweight is regarded as the most common prevalent nutritional disorder of U.S. children and adolescents, underscoring the need for regular exercise in programs for young children. First Lady Michelle Obama's emphasis on nutrition and exercise ([www.HealthCare.gov](http://www.HealthCare.gov)) has highlighted appropriate ways to play, eat, and stay healthy.

**Violence and Disaster.** Violence and disaster are becoming regular features in young children's lives. The trend of children's increasing exposure to conflict that ends in violence is alarming.

- Parents report tensions between themselves and their children.
- Increased violence on television and war toys contribute to a sense of being out of control in limiting or influencing children's behavior.
- Teachers see problems in children's play, that weapon and war play in classrooms is so single-purpose and intense that it is difficult to redirect.

When a real catastrophe happens, children need help making sense of the calamity, then support in recovery. Shock, confusion, fear, anxiety, grief, anger, guilt, and helplessness are all common emotional responses to trauma. Whether the event is national—as 9/11 was for the United States—or local, children worry.

In both cases, organizations such as Adults and Children Together Against Violence (ACT) and Educators for Social Responsibility, as well as the National Association for Mediation in Education, serve as clearinghouses for information and material and as training institutes for teachers. They suggest the following:

- *Stop, look, and listen.* See what children are really doing and saying (or not).
- *Be aware of your own feelings.* Self-awareness helps you balance your responses without avoidance or overreaction.
- *Ask before you tell.* Open-ended questions welcome children's talking.
- *Provide structure.* Clear routines and variety keeps interest high and focused.
- *Work with parents and families.* Everyone needs to pitch in here.

### 1-4c Transmission of Values

The third recurring theme in our educational heritage is that of transmitting values. Values—whether social, cultural, moral, or religious—have been the essence of education for centuries. Rousseau and Froebel valued childhood, so they created special places for children to express their innate goodness and uniqueness, and Puritan fathers valued

biblical theology; therefore, schools of their time taught children to read to learn the Bible. Today's anti-bias movement (see Social Diversity section) reflects a priority of personal respect and an appreciation of culture as part of the early childhood curriculum.

"People are so overwhelmed," write Brazelton and Greenspan (2001) "While they're whirling around, they don't have time to stop and think, 'What are my values? Do my children really come first? Am I making time for them in my life?'" Many families today are looking for direction for themselves and their children. Many sources shape children's values and behavior, notably the media culture and social diversity.

## The Media Culture

In many homes, the television, computer, and video game sets have replaced adult supervision. Consider these facts and the reality that research firms are "applying the study of the human brain and the nervous system to consumer research, in order to determine a consumer's non-conscious response to brands, products, packaging, in-store marketing, advertising, and entertainment content" (Nielsen Media Research, 2014).

- In the United States, 98% of homes contain at least one television.
- The average set is on for more than 6 hours each day.
- Children spend more time watching television (15,000 hours) than they do in school (11,000 hours).
- Children will likely witness on screen 180,000 murders, rapes, armed robberies, and assaults.

What happens to children when they are this plugged into media? Common Sense Media and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) analyzed 173 studies about the effect of media consumption on children, finding a strong correlation between greater exposure and adverse health outcomes. "Couch potato does, unfortunately, sum it up pretty well," states E. J. Emanuel, chair of bioethics at NIH. "The research is clear that exposure to media has a variety of negative health impacts on children and teens. . . . We found very few studies that had any positive association for children's health" (Common Sense Media, 2008). Too much media violence is hazardous to children in these ways (Gordon & Browne, 2013):

## Hazards of Too Much Media Violence

- Increased aggressiveness and antisocial behavior
- Increased fear of becoming a victim
- Increased desensitization to violence and victims of violence
- Increased appetite for more violence in entertainment and real life

**multicultural education.** The system of teaching and learning that includes the contributions of all ethnic and racial groups.

## Managing Media

Strategy	Description	Example
<i>Set limits.</i>	Know how many hours of TV children watch and monitor it.	Keep it to 2 hours or less; keep the TV off unless someone is actively viewing; establish rules, such as "Game-playing is part of my daily 'screen time' allowance."
<i>Plan and participate.</i>	Work together with children to decide what to watch.	Watch shows together, pointing out parts that are prosocial and asking about those parts you dislike; use the "pause," "rewind," and "mute" buttons regularly.
<i>Resist commercials.</i>	Young children do not distinguish easily between the sales pitch commercial and the ordinary show.	Help children become "critical consumers" by pointing out exaggerated claims; ask: "What are they trying to sell us?"
<i>Express your views.</i>	Call a station or write a letter about a show or commercial you find offensive.	Ask the children to help write the letter and provide documentation.

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## TeachSource Digital Download

- Increased aggressiveness and antisocial behavior
- Increased fear of becoming a victim
- Increased desensitization to violence and victims of violence
- Increased appetite for more violence in entertainment and real life.

Moreover, Northwestern University's Center on Media and Human Development reported that "children from minority families are more likely to 1) live in homes where the television is always on and 2) eat in front of the television" (Levin, 2013). Managing media is a critical task for adults who are with young children.

## Social Diversity

**Multicultural Education.** Multicultural education is the system of teaching and learning that includes the contributions of all ethnic and racial groups. A comprehensive educational approach that reflects more minority perspectives, multicultural education provides all children with a fuller, more balanced truth about themselves, their own history, and their culture. When the metaphor of "melting pot" changes to one

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# Professionalism

## A Notable Portrait

Louise Derman-Sparks, in collaboration with Elizabeth Jones and colleagues from Pacific Oaks College, published *Anti-Bias Curriculum: Tools for Empowering Young Children* (Derman-Sparks et al., 1989). This book outlined several areas in which children's behavior was influenced by biases in our society, and it suggested a host of ways that teachers (and parents) could begin addressing these issues. These professionals have added an important dimension to the notion of social reform because they focus our attention on ourselves, the school environment, children's interactions, and the community of parents and colleagues in educational settings.

Derman-Sparks and Olsen Edwards (2010) have revised the original book into a new work, *Anti-bias Education for Young Children and Ourselves*. It is critical that today's teachers learn to integrate awareness of race/ ethnicity, culture, ability/disability, and gender and the effects of bias on children's behavior into their daily practices.

of “mosaic” or “mixed salad,” we encourage a new way of thinking that might be termed *cultural pluralism*—the idea that we are all one people, but we do not necessarily divest ourselves of our own ethnic origin. The early childhood program will become multicultural as each child's total personal diversity is respected and the child's family, language, and cultural traditions become part of the class and curriculum. Teachers will need special training in anti-bias curriculum approaches (see Chapter 9) that prepare them to be effective in addressing such topics as prejudice reduction training, bicultural expectations, physical and interpersonal environmental factors, varied teaching strategies, inclusive curriculum, and culturally responsible conduct.

**Bilingual Education.** Bilingual education is a challenge at all levels of education. There are disagreements about how to define bilingualism, how to determine who needs it, and who is to provide the services. Bilingual education has been part of the American experience since before the Revolutionary War, when school was taught in any one of the more than 18 languages that were spoken by the colonists. Speaking English is only part of bilingual education: at issue are the civil and educational rights of people who speak limited English, the respect or assimilation of their culture, and their participation and acceptance in society.

Bilingual programs are so varied that it is difficult to assess them. Some work to mainstream children into regular classrooms as quickly as possible; others try to maintain the child's native language. The “dual/bilingual immersion” method blends language instruction in both languages. Putting together both English speakers and those with limited English encourages two-way learning.

## English Language Learning

### Age of Children

0–5 years

### How Taught

Standard is “English-immersion”: taught in English with little extra instruction, with some teacher use of home language vocabulary.

### Noteworthy

Can acquire native-like mastery of second language; risk for substantial erosion of home language and ability to communicate with family.

5+1 years

Standard is “English immersion,” but some subjects may be taught in home language to aid skill-building; school-aged children better at formal teaching of second language.

Children have complex social issues that may interfere; low competence in both languages may occur until mastery is achieved.

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State bilingual education laws vary, requiring special instruction for children who lack competence in English. For example, a 1998 California law effectively ended publicly funded bilingual programs, to be replaced by shorter-term, intensive English-immersion programs at the elementary and secondary levels.

**Immigration.** Immigration is another serious challenge for schools. Attempting to immerse new children into an “American way” and to teach basic skills needed to succeed in the new country have been central functions of schools throughout U.S. history. Since 1968, Title VII programs (the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, also known as the Bilingual Education Act) have addressed the needs of students with limited proficiency in English. In the United States, there are more than 2.5 million school-aged immigrants and at least as many immigrant children younger than 5 years (CDF, 2010). Immigrant enrollment in schools varies among the states and can reach as high as 95% in some schools.

The language barrier is the most immediate problem, followed by that of acceptance of the immigrants' native culture. Further, many newcomers arrive from countries racked with war, violence, and poverty. These children and families are under tremendous pressures and need

**bilingual education.** Varied and difficult to assess, it is a system of teaching and learning in which children who speak limited English are taught in English-speaking classrooms.

Our history provides examples of programs for children of many ethnic groups, as well as examples of exclusion from schooling.

Our present DAP practices offer ways to include and welcome social diversity into ECE programs.



What is our vision of the future for ALL children?

**Figure 1-4** Social diversity: A theme of ECE.

help coping with the overwhelming stress and dislocation. The way schools place and monitor immigrant children—both their educational progress and their general well-being—challenges educators and all American citizens to clarify the responsibilities our society has toward its newcomers.

**Inclusive Education.** Inclusive education has been recognized since the 1970s when the Americans with Disabilities Act was passed to reasonably accommodate individuals with disabilities in order to integrate them into the program to the extent feasible, given each individual's limitations. Key principles follow:

- Individuality (understand the limitations and needs of each individual)
- Reasonableness (of the accommodation to the program and the person)
- Integration (of the individual with others)

**least restrictive environment.** The IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) requirement for placing students with disabilities such that children with disabilities are educated with those who are not disabled.

**inclusion.** When a child with a disability is a full-time member of a regular classroom with children who are developing normally as well as with children with special needs.

Accommodating a child with special needs is unreasonable only if it puts an undue burden on a program, fundamentally alters the nature of the program, or poses a threat to the health or safety of the other children and staff. With these guidelines in mind, children with special needs will do best in the **least restrictive environment**, with as **full inclusion** as possible.

Still, many children have special needs that remain undiagnosed, and others have difficulty finding appropriate placement, particularly in programs for children younger than 5 years. Early childhood special education is a relatively new area of our profession, and most educators need support in learning about special needs and what it means to be inclusive of children with special needs without altering program quality for all children or overwhelming and exhausting staff.

## Diversity

### Celebrate Differences or Stay Gender-Neutral?

*Begin with yourself.* Start with self-awareness and reflection on one's own behavior, responses, and attitudes.

*What you say and do can make a difference.* Acknowledge positive behaviors and milestones by describing what you see and avoid using gender designations (such as "All boys get your jackets," or "All girls go to the snack tables").

*Watch your language.* Avoid descriptions of children such as "pretty/handsome" and treat the class as a group ("friends" rather than "boys and girls"); be careful of word choices that reflect gender bias (such as "He is confident/She is full of herself").

*Establish rules and conduct for cooperation and gender equity.* Everybody may play everywhere with any toy; blocks are not just for boys, and the house corner is not for girls only; no child may be kept from playing because of something she or he cannot change—skin color, disability, or gender.

*Be ready to intervene and support.* If you hear a "No boys allowed," or "Girls can't do that," be ready to intervene in a supportive way, finding out why children think that, evaluating your thoughts, and pointing out what the class rule is.

*Think about how to cope with superheroes and Barbie dolls.* Develop strategies for all children, including providing activities that all children may use, that are sex fair and sex affirmative in content, and using strategies such as teacher proximity and structured playtime to involve children in activities they may otherwise avoid.

## Ethics

### Respectful Practices

Our Code of Professional Ethics states that “above all, we shall not harm children. We shall not participate in practices that are disrespectful, degrading, dangerous, exploitative, intimidating, emotionally damaging, or physically harmful to children.” With this in mind, look at your own feelings about homosexuality:

- > Recognize any biases that you or children in your care may express about other children stigmatized as sissies/tomboys.
- > Immediately handle any instances of student-to-student abuse and harassment, no matter how slight.
- > Challenge negative remarks about gay people and other minority groups.
- > Use classroom meetings or informal small groups, starting with a stem phrase for the children to complete, such as “When I am teased it makes me feel . . .” and help children focus on how people feel when they are harassed. No child should feel ashamed about her family, teachers, or self.

- > Having multicultural children’s books and materials about gay families

If teachers are relinquishing stereotypes about ethnicity, ability, and gender, they must also consider avoiding the rejection of a family for its choice of lifestyle or criticism of a child on the basis of some notion of ‘femininity’ or ‘masculinity.’ Research has failed to find evidence that parental characteristics determine sexual orientation (Berger, 2012). Whether or not the issue is controversial, the more forthright approach is to address the issue honestly.

### 1-4d Professionalism

If you are thinking about working with young children as a career, you may be wondering whether early childhood education is a profession worthy of a lifetime commitment (see Chapter 5). A challenging, intellectually stimulating, and rewarding future can be found in the overarching issue of **standards** in children’s programs and in professional preparation, as well as a third issue of **advocacy**.

**Gender Issues.** Gender issues are part of the educational landscape. There is ample research to confirm the widespread occurrence of gender segregation in childhood (Grossman & Grossman, 1994). Sex differences are less apparent in early childhood than is gender-based behavior (see Chapter 4). Although adults may not always directly contribute to biased development, teachers and parents are indirectly responsible for the inequity between the sexes in their children. **Sexist** treatment in the classroom encourages the formation of patterns of power and dominance that occur very early, although it is inappropriate to our current culture.

**Sexuality.** Sexuality is not likely to be among typical early childhood curriculum topics, yet teachers are likely to encounter issues of homosexuality:

- > Having gay or lesbian families in children’s programs
- > Working with gay or lesbian coworkers
- > Dealing with femininity and masculinity in children’s sex role identity

## Standards

### Why You Should Know This

The economics of child care create a **trilemma**—quality for children, affordability for parents, and adequate compensation for teachers. Quality is significantly related to staff: how many adults there are compared with the number of children in a class; whether the salaries and benefits provide incentive for teachers to be retained for a number of years; and the level of the staff’s education and training and their years of experience. To improve quality, we look for the following:

- > Improved working conditions for teachers
  - > Appropriate licensing for early childhood programs and homes
  - > Staff training and preparation
  - > Funding commensurate with per-child levels for elementary school children
- National efforts include the NAEYC Standards for Early Childhood Professional Preparation as well as research efforts of groups such as the National Child Care Information and Technical Assistance Center (Sakai & Whitebook, 2004), refer to the six Standards of Professional Preparation on the inside cover as you read the book; each chapter will highlight the relevant standards to prepare you to become a professional early childhood educator. Engage in collaborative learning with others to inform your practice and your knowledge base. In doing so, you help lead the early childhood field in bringing the important issues of the profession to national attention.

**sexist.** Attitudes or behavior based on the traditional stereotype of sexual roles that includes a devaluation or discrimination based on a person’s sex.

**trilemma.** A child care issue involving quality for children, affordability for parents, and adequate compensation for staff.

**standards.** The rules and principles used as a basis for judgment of quality and positive models for professional preparation, children’s programs, and educational practices.

**advocacy.** The act of supporting, pleading for, or recommending and espousing a particular action or set of ideas on behalf of early education.

## Standards in Children's Programs

The rich array of programs offered for children in group care from infancy through 8 years of age is so diverse, it is often difficult to define and assess standards of care and education with one set of guidelines. Consider these statistics:

- In 11 states, providers in family child care homes do not need any training to be licensed (NACCRRRA, 2010)
- 32 states do not require prior training to teach in child care centers and 39 (and the District of Columbia) do not require training of family child care providers (CDF, 2010)
- In 2012, only 7000 programs were accredited by the NAEYC Academy of Early Childhood Programs (NAEYC, 2012)

The most comprehensive set of standards for programs has evolved from DAP and is discussed at length in Chapter 2.

## Standards for Professional Preparation

The quality of care in child development centers is linked to the training and education of the staff. Consequently, it is

### teachsource video case

Watch the TeachSource Video Case entitled "Teaching as a Profession: An Early Childhood Teacher's Responsibilities and Development." After you study the video clip, view the artifacts, and read the teacher interviews and text, reflect on the following questions:

1. How does preschool teacher Samantha Brade show her sense of the importance of early childhood education, and what values is she trying to transmit?
2. How does Samantha demonstrate professionalism, and why should this inform one's teaching?



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imperative that we attract and recruit to the field of early childhood education individuals who not only are dedicated to working with young children but also are skilled and competent. Many states are working on developing career ladders and professional development plans for early childhood staff. Consideration must be given to developing a coordinated system that accomplished the following:

## truth<sup>or</sup> fiction?

**T F** Standards for teacher preparation are universal.

Many states are working on standards and career ladders of their own. In addition, NAEYC has a set of six standards for professional preparation.

- Welcomes people into the field from a variety of points
- Offers clear career pathways with articulated training and credentialing systems
- Provides a variety of incentives to stay in the field (see Chapter 5)

## Advocacy

Is this profession a worthwhile one? The early years are a special time of life, and those who work with young children might reflect on the following aspects of professionalism:

*Sense of identity.* Early childhood education professionals see themselves as caregivers who strive to educate the whole child, taking into consideration the body, the mind, and the heart and soul (see Chapter 3).

*Purpose to engage in DAP.* Quality care and education call for blending child development and learning the strengths, interests, and needs of each child as well as the social and cultural contexts in which children live (see Chapter 2).

*Commitment to ethical teaching and to child advocacy.* Being a professional means behaving with a child's best interests in mind, maintaining confidentiality when discussing issues in the classroom and about families, upholding a code of ethics, and taking oneself and one's work seriously (see Chapter 5).

*Participation in the work as a legitimate livelihood.* The people who provide care and education to young children deserve wages and working conditions that are worthy of their efforts.

Ours is a profession that is constantly growing, branching out in many directions and ready to meet emerging challenges in flexible, innovative ways.

## summary

- 1.1** To identify the historical roots of early childhood education, it is important to recognize that our roots include influences from abroad and from America. European figures include Comenius, Locke, Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel, Montessori, Steiner, and the McMillan Sisters. American influences come from Colonial days and from the slavery experience—Dewey, Hill, Mitchell, and Eliot.
- 1.2** In examining the early childhood field and its evolution, one notices that the ECE field can be divided into three main components: nursery school and its spin-offs, kindergarten, and programs with a message that deal with child care, equal rights, and Head Start.
- 1.3** The major disciplines that distinguish the ECE field are the three major interdisciplinary influences of medicine, education, and psychology. Important figures in medicine are Montessori, Freud, Gesell, Spock, and Brazelton. Educational influences came from Isaacs, the Progressive Education Movement with Dewey, and the schools of Reggio Emilia. The child

study movement and the many developmental and learning theories from psychology also helped form ECE philosophy and practices, with the most current being neuroscience and brain-based research.

- 1.4** An investigation of the major current issues involving ECE reveals that issues of today focus on the four major themes in ECE. The *ethic of social reform* involves quality child care, federal efforts of NCLB (no child left behind), Race to the Top & Common Core, as well as DAP (developmentally appropriate practices). The *importance of childhood* surrounds family stressors of divorce, work, and poverty as well as children's health risks such as abuse and neglect, obesity, and violence and disaster. The *transmission of values* includes media culture and several aspects of social diversity, such as multicultural and bilingual education, immigration, inclusion, gender issues, and sexuality. *Professionalism* can be seen in Standards for children's programs and professional preparation as well as Advocacy.

## web resources

Annie E. Casey Foundation, KIDS COUNT Data Center  
<http://www.aecf.org>  
Association for Childhood International Education  
<http://acei.org>  
Center for the Study of the Child Care Workforce  
<http://www.ccw.org>  
Childhelp <http://www.childhelp.org>  
Children's Defense Fund  
<http://www.childrensdefense.org>

National Association of Child Care Resources and Referral Agencies <http://www.naccrra.org>  
National Association for the Education of Young Children <http://www.naeyc.org>  
National Center for Health Statistics  
<http://www.cdc.gov>  
The Obesity Society <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/>  
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services  
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A photograph of two young children, a boy and a girl, playing in a white plastic tub filled with water. Both children are wearing red aprons over their clothes. The boy, on the left, is leaning over the tub, and the girl, on the right, is also leaning over. They are playing with various toys in the water, including a yellow toy boat, a green toy boat, a purple toy boat, and a clear plastic bottle. In the background, there are shelves with various toys and materials, including a wooden crate filled with small blocks and a stack of blue plastic bins. The scene is set in a classroom or playroom.

# 2

## types of programs



## Learning Outcomes

- 2-1** Define developmentally appropriate practices in early childhood programs.
- 2-2** Describe the core programs of early childhood education.
- 2-3** Identify the variations of program options.
- 2-4** Describe why the process of assessing quality in early childhood programs is important.

### NAEYC Standards

The following NAEYC Standards for Early Childhood Professional Preparation are addressed in this chapter:

- Standard 1: Promoting Child Development and Learning
- Standard 2: Building Family and Community Relationships
- Standard 3: Observing, Documenting, and Assessing to Support Young Children and Families
- Standard 4: Using Developmentally Effective Approaches to Connect with Children and Families
- Standard 5: Using Current Knowledge to Build Meaningful Curriculum
- Standard 6: Becoming a Professional
- Standard 7: Field Experience

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## truth<sup>or</sup>fiction

- T F** DAP does not include family involvement.
- T F** Two programs form the core of early care and education.
- T F** Infant/toddler programs are adapted versions of good programs for 3-year-olds.
- T F** The objectives and goals of the program will determine the type of assessment instrument used.

## 2-1 Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs

Throughout this text and whenever quality early childhood principles are discussed, we use the term **developmentally appropriate practices (DAP)**, those teaching practices that are based on the observation and responsiveness to children who have different rates of growth and learning experiences that are relevant to and respectful of the cultural and social aspects of children and families. Refer to the discussion of the DAP Umbrella in Chapter 1 on page 6.

### 2-1a Three Core Components of DAP

As noted in Chapter 1, there are three important aspects of DAP:

1. What is known about *child development and learning*.
2. What is known about the strengths, interests, and needs of *each individual child* in the group.
3. Knowledge of the *social and cultural contexts* in which children live.

### 2-1b DAP in Action

A solid grounding in child development knowledge is the core around which the idea of *developmentally appropriate* is built. Programs are designed for young children based on what is known *about* young children (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009). To that mix we add what we learn about the individual children and their families. This collective knowledge is applied to each decision that is made about the program:

- What are children like?
- How do they learn?
- What should they learn?
- When should they learn it?
- How should they be taught?
- How do we know they are learning?

### What DAP Looks Like

- Programs and curricula respond to the children's interests as well as their needs.
- Children are actively involved in their own learning, choosing from a variety of materials and equipment.
- Play is the primary context in which young children learn and grow.

**developmentally appropriate practices (DAP).** Practices that are suitable or fitting to the development of the child and are relevant and respectful to the social and cultural aspects of children and families.

- Teachers apply what they know about each child and use a variety of strategies, materials, and learning experiences to be responsive to individual children.
- Teachers consider widely held expectations about each age group and temper that with challenging yet achievable learning goals.
- Teachers understand that any activity has the potential for different children to realize different learning from the same experience.
- All aspects of development—physical, social-emotional, cognitive, and language—are integrated in the activities and opportunities of the program. This includes specific attention to dual-language learners.



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Active, involved, and interested: that's DAP! ◀

### How DAP Benefits Children

Developmentally appropriate principles benefit children in many ways, including the following:

1. Allow children to construct their own understanding of what they are learning and encourage learning from instruction by more competent peers and adults
2. Enhance opportunities to see connections across disciplines through integration of curriculum and from opportunities to engage in in-depth study
3. Provide a predictable structure and routine in the learning environment and through the teacher's flexibility and spontaneity in responding to their emerging ideas, needs, and interests
4. Support children making meaningful choices about what they will do
5. Present situations that challenge children to work at the edge of their capacities and ample opportunity to practice newly acquired skills
6. Provide opportunities to collaborate with their peers and acquire a sense of community
7. Assist children in developing a positive sense of their own self-identity and respect for other people, whose perspective and experiences may be different from their own

# truth<sup>or</sup>fiction?

**T F** DAP does not include family involvement.

The knowledge and understanding of the child and family and their goals and expectations are a critical part of the DAP mix.

8. Capitalize on children's enormous curiosity and capacities to learn
9. Promote self-initiated, spontaneous play along with teacher-planned structured activities, projects, and experiences

## 2-1c Developmentally and Culturally Appropriate Practice

**Culturally appropriate practice** is the ability to go beyond one's own sociocultural background to ensure equal and fair teaching and learning experiences for all.

The definition of DAP expands to address cultural influences that emphasize the adult's ability to develop a multiethnic outlook (Hyun, 1998), who notes that preparing

## DAP

### How DAP Planning Works

1. *What does child development tell us about toddlers?*  
Toddlers express their needs to do everything by themselves, usually more than they can actually achieve. They like to feel independent and will learn quickly if given a little help and encouragement.
2. *What do we know about each child as an individual?*  
Many of these toddlers rely on family members to help feed and dress them and to clean up their toys. Other toddlers are being taught these skills at home. Most of the children come to the teachers for help. One toddler will persist in putting on her coat while another will throw his shoe across the floor if it does not fit at the first attempt.
3. *What do we know about the social and cultural context of each child's life?* Most of the children in this group come from homes in which help is readily available. The group's dominant cultural values and child-rearing practices reinforce dependence and community, although there is a smaller group of families who want their children to become more independent in taking care of their own needs.

These questions become the focus of conversations between home and school to determine the best solutions for all. Decision making is shared among the teachers and the families.



Individual attention and warm relationships are essential components of every program. ◀

teachers and caregivers for multiculturalism is not just about becoming sensitive to race, language, gender, ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic status, or sexual orientation. It is also related to an understanding of the way individual histories, families of origin, and ethnic family cultures make us similar to and yet different from others. These insights help teachers to respond positively to the individual child's unique life experiences.

Children's growth and development can be understood only within their cultural context.

## 2-2 Early Childhood Core Programs

From the types available to the numbers of children who attend these schools, the name of the game in early childhood programs is diversity. The range can encompass full-day or half-day care, infant and toddler programs, primary school, before-school and after-school care, and **kindergarten**. The ages range from infancy through 10 years, and the programs

**culturally appropriate practice.** Curriculum that helps children understand the way individual histories, families of origins, and ethnic family cultures make us similar to and yet different from others.

**kindergarten.** A school or class for children 4 to 6 years old; in the United States, kindergarten is either the first year of formal, public school or the year of schooling before first grade.

# Diversity

## Connecting Cultures between Home and School

Children need a sense of cultural congruency between their home and school in order to maximize their educational experience. Together, families and teachers can support each other by sharing information that enhances a teacher's understanding of the culture of the family.

FirstSchool, a project of the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, partners with schools to improve PreK-3rd grade school experiences for African American, Latino, and low income children and their families. In a recent guide, (Gillanders & Gutman, 2013) noted a variety of methods that teachers can use to enhance children's social-emotional, cognitive, academic, and cultural needs:

1. Focus groups that help identify the effectiveness of the home-school partnership.
2. School-wide questionnaire for in-depth knowledge of the family's beliefs and practices.
3. Home visits to learn about family routines and sociocultural practices.
4. Community visits for staff who reside elsewhere to become familiar with the greater community in which the child lives.
5. Classroom questionnaires to find out how parents perceive their child's progress and their satisfaction with the way the school communicates with them.
6. Parent-teacher conferences used to inform parents of their child's progress and to learn the parents' viewpoint about their children's learning.
7. Phone calls, e-mails, and text messages are used as a quick way to touch base, just say "hello," check up on a child's illness, and to send pictures back and forth of children at work and play.

The information from such data gathering can inform curriculum planning, teaching strategies, parent involvement, and ways to respect and reflect the culture of the children's and families within the classroom.

take place in homes, schools, community centers, churches and synagogues, and business work places.

Programs for young children exist to serve a number of needs, which often overlap. Some of these are the following:

Caring for children while parents work (e.g., family child care homes, child care center)

Enrichment programs for children (e.g., half-day nursery school, laboratory school)

Educational programs for parent and child (e.g., parent cooperatives, parent-child public school programs, high school parent classes)

Activity arena for children (e.g., most early childhood programs)

Specialized setting for children with specific disabilities

Academic or readiness instruction (e.g., kindergarten, many early childhood programs)

Culturally or religiously specific programs (e.g., a school setting with a definitive African American focus or a **faith-based school** that teaches religious dogma)

Philosophy-specific programs (e.g., Montessori, Reggio Emilia, Waldorf schools)

Training grounds for teacher education (provide opportunities for student teachers to learn best practices and observe young children)

## NAEYC DAP in Action

### DAP in Action—Respect for Cultural Diversity

Using NAEYC's criteria for cultural diversity, these examples demonstrate how DAP supports greater consistency between home and school cultures when you:

- > Build a sense of the group as a community, bringing each child's home culture and language into the shared culture of the school so each child feels accepted and gains a sense of belonging
- > Provide books, materials, images, and experiences that reflect diverse cultures that children may not likely see, as well as those that represent their family life and cultural group
- > Initiate discussions and activities to teach respect and appreciation for similarities and differences among people
- > Talk positively about each child's physical characteristics, family, and cultural heritage
- > Avoid stereotyping of any group through materials, objects, language
- > Invite families' participation in all aspects of the program
- > Take trips to museums and cultural resources of the community
- > Infuse all curriculum topics with diverse cultural perspectives, avoiding a "tourist" approach

**Figure 2-1** All children and their families deserve to be in programs in which their lives are respected and in which they can be proud of their cultural heritage (NAEYC, 1998). (Source: Data from NAEYC, 1998)

**faith-based school.** A school that teaches religious dogma.

I am a teacher at a large preschool that is part of the local Jewish community. The preschool shares the site with a synagogue, the temple offices, and the religious grade school. I do not happen to be Jewish so I have had much to learn about working in such an environment. When I first came to the school 10 years ago, I was nervous about fitting in. I believed that I would be the only non-Jewish person at the school. As it turned out, I found this community to be very welcoming. In our particular school, about half of the teachers are Jewish. Our students in the preschool are not all Jewish either. The student body is made up of Temple members, children who live in mixed faith families, and children who are not Jewish at all but come to our school for the stellar education they receive here. This diversity is typical of the area in which we live and it's one of the things that makes our school great. We are proud to reflect and serve the surrounding neighborhood.

I have found that no matter what religion is involved, certain principles hold true. These are some of the insights I've gained:

1. My first responsibility is to the children's development. Developmentally

appropriate practices can be adapted to any curriculum, including one based on a faith perspective.

2. At their core, religions are moral-and-values based. Issues such as justice, equality, compassion, and service to others are ideals common to many secular early childhood programs and familiar to early childhood teachers. For example, we teach our students about helping others who are less fortunate by collecting *Tzedakah* (charity) coins from the children every Friday. We count the coins at the end of the year and decide as a class how to use this money to help others. Classes have used the money to buy food for our local food bank, to buy books to donate to shelters, and to plant trees in Israel. At my school, we use the Jewish holidays to teach values to young children as well. My favorite holiday to celebrate in pre-school is Tu B'Shevat, the new year of the trees. On this day my class learns how trees grow and why they are important to people and to the earth. Then we all go outside under the trees in our yard to eat treats and have a birthday party for the trees.

3. It is important to make an effort to get to know the values and beliefs you will be representing. I had to learn the blessing that is recited before each meal in Hebrew. The children appreciated that I was learning about their faith along with them.
4. We know that parents are an integral part of a child's school experience. In my setting, many parents are temple members and have an added stake in the school. This can prove to be quite different from teaching in a preschool environment with a yearly turnover. In some schools parents are seen only at pick-up time, at my school parents are welcome to join us for school wide Shabbat Service every Friday. They are present at many holiday functions and if they are Jewish, these same parents may be sending their child to our religious school on our campus for years to come.

I find that having the Jewish teachings and blessing helps the teachers remember to stop and see the wonders of our everyday world and to have reverence for the wonders of the magical time of early childhood.

By Danielle

## 2-2a Factors that Determine Types of Programs

Programs in early childhood settings are defined by many factors, and each is a part of the mission of the program. Any given program is a combination of those factors, and each has an impact on the quality and type of learning that takes place. Some of those factors are the following:

1. Ages of the children being served
2. Philosophical, theoretical, or theological ideals
3. Goals of the program
4. Purpose for which the program was established
5. Requirements of the sponsoring agency
6. Quality and training of teaching staff
7. Shape, size, and location of the physical environment
8. Cultural, ethnic, languages spoken, economic, and social make-up of the community

9. Financial stability
10. Professionalism of staff

## 2-2b Special Features

A program usually has a number of goals that may result in special features. One goal may be to encourage children to share their knowledge and skills and to learn from one another, and the program will reflect that goal in several ways.

### Mixed-Age Grouping

One way to achieve the goal for cooperative learning is to have **mixed-age groups**, where children of several age levels are in the same classroom. This practice is often referred to

**mixed-age group.** The practice of placing children of several levels, generally one year apart, into the same classroom. Also referred to as family grouping, heterogeneous grouping, multiage grouping, vertical grouping, and ungraded classes.

## teachsource video case

Watch the TeachSource Video Case entitled, "Curriculum Planning: Implementing Developmentally Appropriate Practice in an Early Childhood Program." After you study the video clip, view the artifacts, and read the teacher interviews and text, reflect on the following questions:

1. What examples of developmentally appropriate practices did you see or hear mentioned by preschool teacher Ke Nguyen and her colleagues? Compare and contrast your observations with the text.
2. How would you judge the quality of this program? What criteria would you use?



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as *family grouping* or *heterogeneous, vertical, or ungraded grouping*, and although not a new idea, it is emerging as an area of considerable interest to early childhood educators. Montessori schools, one-room schoolhouses, and the Reggio Emilia schools have observed this practice for many years.

The age range among children in mixed-age groups is usually more than 1 year. There are a number of developmental advantages when children interact with peers above and below their age level:

1. Each child's own developmental level and pace are accommodated, allowing children to advance as they are ready.
2. Age and competition are de-emphasized as cooperative learning is enhanced.
3. Caring and helping behaviors toward younger children and a sense of responsibility toward one another are fostered.
4. Diverse learning styles and multiple intelligences are appreciated.
5. A variety and number of different models for learning and for friendships are available.

**looping.** The practice of keeping a teacher and a group of children in a class together for two or more years.

**traditional nursery school/preschool.** The core of early childhood educational theory and practice; program designed for children aged two-and-a-half to five years of age, which may be a part- or an all-day program.

6. Children grow in independence in their work and in socialization.

The risks associated with mixed-age groupings include the following:

1. The potential for older children to take over and overwhelm the younger ones is real, as is the possibility that younger children will pester the older children. This requires monitoring by the teaching staff, and the Reggio Emilia schools offer a good model here. In these Italian programs, older children have the responsibility to work with the younger children, explaining things and helping them find appropriate roles to take in their projects.
2. The academic and social advantages of mixed-age grouping cannot occur without a variety of activities from which children may freely choose and the opportunity for small groups of children to work together.
3. Teachers must be intentional about encouraging children to work with others who have skills and knowledge they do not yet possess.

Mixed-age groupings reflect the principles of Dewey, Piaget, Gardner, and Vygotsky, through the interactions of peers as well as adults. The practice of mixed-age grouping has much to commend it and must be seriously addressed as an issue in programs for young children.

### Looping

The practice of keeping a group of children and their teacher together in the same class for at least 2 years is called **looping**.

Like mixed-age grouping, looping is an old idea revisited and is found today in the Waldorf schools and Reggio Emilia programs. Looping is often paired with mixed-age classrooms, which further extends the natural, family-like atmosphere.

The benefits of looping are as follows:

1. Providing stability and emotional security to children
2. Giving teachers a greater opportunity to get to know children and therefore be able to individualize the program for them
3. Fostering better social interactions among children
4. Enhancing a sense of family and community within the classroom

Critics of looping cite the need for experienced teachers who enjoy teaching across the age levels and who can work with the same children over an extended period of time.

## 2-2c The Core Programs of Early Childhood Education

Two types of programs form the basis for a number of variations that exist in the field today. Traditional nursery schools and child care programs reflect the historical nature of early childhood education.

### The Traditional Nursery School/Preschool

The **traditional nursery school/preschool** exemplifies a developmental approach to learning in which children actively

explore materials and in which activity or learning centers are organized to meet the developing skills and interests of the child. Most of these programs serve children from 2½ to 5 years of age.

Developmentally, a traditional nursery school focuses on social competence and emotional well-being. The curriculum encourages self-expression through language, creativity, intellectual skill, and physical activity. The basic underlying belief is the importance of interpersonal connections children make with themselves, each other, and adults.

The daily schedule (Fig. 2-2) reflects these beliefs:

- Large blocks of time are devoted to free play, when children are free to initiate their own activities and become deeply involved without interruptions. This not only emphasizes the importance of play but also allows children to learn to make their own choices, select their own playmates, and work on their interests and issues at their own rate.
- There is a balance of activities (indoors and out, free choice, and teacher-directed times) and a wide variety of activities: large- and small-muscle games, intellectual choices, creative arts, and social play opportunities.
- Although nursery schools are often half-day programs, many now offer extended hours through lunch time.

The role of the teacher and methods of teaching are important. Nursery schools assume that young children need individual attention and should have personal, warm relationships with important adults. This philosophy reflects the influence of Dewey, Piaget, Erikson, and others and is reflected in the program in many ways:

- The groups of children are generally small, often fewer than 20 in a class.
- The teacher-to-child ratio is low, as few as 6 to 10 children for each teacher.

### Sample Schedule for Traditional Nursery School

9:00	Children arrive at school
9:00–9:45	Free play (indoors)
9:45	Cleanup
10:00	Singing time (large group)
10:15–10:30	Toileting/snack time (small groups)
10:30–11:30	Free play (outdoors)
11:30	Cleanup
11:45	Story time
12:00	Children leave for home

**Figure 2-2** A sample schedule for traditional half-day nursery schools is the core of early childhood education programs.

- Teachers learn about children's development and needs by observation and direct interaction, rather than from formalized testing, individually and in small groups.
- Teachers encourage children to express themselves, their feelings, and their thinking. Such rapport between teacher and pupil fosters self-confidence, security, and belonging. Proponents of the traditional nursery school believe that these feelings promote positive self-image, healthy relationships, and an encouraging learning environment.

### Universal Preschools

Increasing numbers of school districts are increasingly funding prekindergarten programs for 4-year-olds, although some include 3-year-olds as well. Depending on their goal, these programs fall somewhere between traditional nursery schools and not quite full-day care. For some, the focus is on school readiness; others give priority to children at risk for school failure, children who come from families in which English is not spoken, or low-income families. In states in which early education has achieved a level of support, all 4-year-olds are eligible for enrollment, regardless of income. The concept for universal preschools will be a continuing issue.

### Full-Day Child Care

As noted in Chapter 1, child care is not a modern phenomenon. Some of the first nursery schools in England operated from 8:00 AM until 4:00 or 5:00 PM.

**Full-day child care** is for children who need care for a large portion of their waking day and includes basic caretaking activities of eating, dressing, and resting as well as play and learning times. A full-day program includes appropriate curriculum, and the schedule is extended to fit the hours of working parents. Child care centers often serve infants and toddlers as well as the 2½- to 5-year-old range. Many offer an after-school option as well. The schedule for full-day care in Figure 2-3 reflects a balance of play, learning, and daily routines.

Most full-day care takes place in centers, such as churches and synagogues, YWCA and YMCAs, community and recreational facilities, corporate business buildings, and hospitals. They are private and public. Most operate year-round. In addition, child care, especially for children younger than 3 years, may be in a home.

### Center-Based Child Care

**Child care centers** serve children from infancy through preschool, and some include kindergarten and before-school and after-school options. A child care center reflects its goals through the daily schedule, as seen in Figure 2-3:

- The morning starts slowly, as children arrive early. As the day draws to a close, children gather together quietly, with less energy and activity.

**full-day child care.** Child care that begins in the morning and goes through the day, often arranged for the hours that parents work.

**Child care centers.** A place for care of children for a large portion of their waking day; includes basic caretaking activities of eating, dressing, resting, and toileting, as well as playing and learning time.

## Sample Full-Day Child Care Schedule

7:00–8:30	Arrival/breakfast; limited indoor play
8:30	Large group meeting
9:45	Cleanup/toileting
8:45–9:45	Free play (inside)
10:00	Snack time (small groups)
10:15–11:30	Free play (outside)
11:30	Cleanup/hand washing
12:00	Lunch
12:30	Tooth brushing/toileting
1:00–2:00	Nap time
2:00–3:00	Free play (outside)
3:00	Group time
3:15	Snack time (small groups)
3:30–5:00	Inside and outside free play/library hour
5:00	Cleanup
5:15–5:30	Departure

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**Figure 2-3** A typical full-day care schedule. Most child care programs combine education and caring for basic needs.

- The center may supply breakfast and midmorning and midafternoon snacks, supplementing a lunch from home. Some centers are funded to supply all of the meals and snacks during the day.
- A nap period for 1 to 2 hours for all the children gives a needed rest and balances their active, social day with quiet, solitary time.
- The program may also include experiences outside the school—field trips, library story hour, or swimming lessons—because children spend the major portion of their waking hours on-site.
- Child care parents may require extra effort; they have full-time jobs as well as child-rearing responsibilities draining their energies. Parents' needs also may be greater and require more of the teachers' time.
- The staff in a full-day setting is often called on to deal with the parenting side of teaching. Children in full-day care may need more nurturing and clearer consistency in behavioral limits from adults.
- The teaching staff has staggered schedules, perhaps a morning and an afternoon shift. Caretakers from both shifts must be aware of what happens when they are not on site to run the program consistently.

**family child care.** Care for children in a small, homelike setting; usually six or fewer children in a family residence.

The most critical issues on child care were noted in Chapter 1. The quality of full-day child care programs is spotty: some are of good quality, with appropriate compensation to maintain staff professionalism and stability; others are of low quality with untrained staff and low salaries. It is worth repeating here that high-quality, affordable child care is an issue that will not go away and deserves the attention of early childhood professionals and legislators.

### Family Child Care Homes

**Family child care** is a type of service reminiscent of an extended family grouping. The home setting, sometimes right within the child's own neighborhood, offers a more intimate, flexible, convenient, and possibly less expensive service for working parents. The children in a family child care home can range from infants to school-aged children who are cared for after regular school hours. The group size can range from 2 to 12, but most homes keep a low adult-to-child ratio, enrolling fewer than 6 children. There are special challenges with family child care:

- Because they often care for infants, preschoolers, and after-schoolers, the developmental ranges that family child care providers must meet may span up to 12 years. That poses a challenge to develop experiences and activities for a mixed-age group of children.
  - Family child care providers work and live in the same environment, posing logistical problems of storage, space definition, and activity space.
  - Family child care providers are administrators and managers as well as teachers and caregivers, faced with budgets and fee collections.
- Family child care has many advantages:
- It is especially good for children who do well in small groups or whose parents prefer them in a family-style setting.
  - Family child care homes often schedule flexible hours to meet the needs of parents who work.
  - The wide age range gives children a chance to learn from one another.
  - Consistency and stability from a single caregiver throughout the child's early years and a family grouping of children provide a homelike atmosphere that is especially appropriate for infants and toddlers.
  - Family child care allows child caregivers to work at home while raising their own children.

Family child care has its disadvantages, too. Many homes are unregulated; that is, they are not under any sponsorship or agency that enforces quality care, and many are exempt from state licensing. Many family child care providers lack knowledge of child development and early education, and are not required to take courses. The National Association for Family Child Care, a network of family child care providers, has established a quarterly publication and is making efforts to address the challenges to these programs.

## 2-3 Variations of Core Programs

There are many variations of the core programs that provide care and education for young children. These programs differ according to the sponsoring agency, the way they serve children and families, their underlying mission, and their profit or nonprofit status.

### 2-3a Head Start and Early Head Start

**Head Start** is a federally funded, comprehensive program providing health, education, and social services to children and their families. Since 1965, Head Start has served more than 30 million children and their families (Head Start, 2012). Most Head Start programs are half-day and serve 3- to 4-year-olds. Head Start programs are housed in churches, synagogues, community centers, elementary schools, and office buildings. The success of Head Start can be attributed to its guiding objectives and principles, most notably expressed through the following:

1. *Its comprehensive nature.* The whole child is nurtured; this includes medical, dental, and nutritional needs, as well as intellectual growth. Extensive health, education, and social services are offered to children and their families.
2. *Parent participation and involvement.* Parents serve as active participants and get involved in the program at all levels: in the classroom as teacher aides, on governing boards making decisions about the program, and as bus drivers and cooks.
3. *Services to families.* Many of the comprehensive services offered to children are extended to parents as well. Paid jobs in the program, on-the-job training, continuing education, job training, and health care are some of the support services families receive.
4. *Community collaboration.* Interest and support from the local community helps Head Start respond to the needs of the children and families it served. Public schools, religious institutions, libraries, service clubs, and local industry and businesses foster responsible attitudes toward society and provide opportunities to work with members of the community in solving problems.
5. *Multicultural/multiracial education.* Since its inception, Head Start has provided a curriculum that reflects the



Routines, such as snacks, provide a balance to an active and busy day at the child care center. ◀

culture, language, and values of the children in the program. Head Start efforts in this regard have been the models for other early childhood programs.

6. *Support for the value of dual-language learning for children whose primary language is not English.* Head Start conducts research and provides resources for families and teachers to help them link culture, language, and learning.
7. *Inclusion of children with special needs.* Since 1972, Head Start has pioneered the inclusion of children with disabilities in its classrooms.
8. *Ecology of the family.* Head Start programs look at children within the context of the family in which they lived and view the family in the context of the neighborhood and community.

## truth<sup>or</sup>fiction?

**T F** Two programs form the core of early care and education.

The traditional nursery school (often called pre-school) and full-day child care are the basis for most other early childhood programs.

**Head Start.** Federally funded comprehensive program for low-income children who are 3, 4, and 5 years old.



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Head Start is a comprehensive program that offers many support services to children and families. ◀

Head Start programs today comply with mandated federal performance standards, a controversial move because these standards of learning focus more heavily on literacy, math, and science. The concern among some early childhood professionals is that the importance of a play-based, developmentally appropriate curriculum will be lost.

Head Start today is challenged by insufficient federal funding, political interference, controversial assessment policies, high numbers of English language learners, and like other programs, staff quality and retention.

**Early Head Start** serves low-income families

with infants and toddlers and pregnant women and is based on Head Start's four cornerstones: child development, family development, staff development, and community development. Like Head Start, this program must comply with federally regulated performance standards.

**Early Head Start.** Federally funded comprehensive program for low-income infants, toddlers, and pregnant women.

**educaring.** A concept of teaching as both educating and care giving; coined by Magda Gerber in referring to people working with infants and toddlers.

## truth<sup>or</sup>fiction?

**T F** Infant/toddler programs are adapted versions of good programs for 3-year-olds.

A quality infant program reflects the unique needs and development of children from birth to age 3.

## 2-3b A Variety of Early Childhood Options

Programs for young children take many forms and allow families to choose the best option to meet their needs. Variations of the core programs are outlined in Figure 2-4.

## 2-3c Infant/Toddler Programs

Parent relationships are an important part of any program for young children, but especially so when babies



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Programs designed for infants help them experiment and explore. ◀

## Professionalism

### Advocating for Infants

Magda Gerber has been a pioneer in infant care and coined the term **educaring** to describe the relationship between an infant and an adult. Gerber's philosophy is based on a respect for babies and the use of responsive and reciprocal interactions in which baby and caregiver learn about each other.

Communicating through caregiving routines (diapering, feeding) in one-to-one intense and focused interactions is a foundation of Gerber's approach to caring for infants and toddlers (Gerber, 1979). Observing, listening, and reading babies' cues are key elements in educaring.

## Chart of Variations of Early Childhood Programs

Type	Sponsor	Ages	Schedule	Key Characteristics	Settings
Parent cooperative	School districts, private owners	Preschoolers; often mixed-age groups	Full-day and/or half-day	Parents commit to teaching in the classroom on a regular basis; regular parent education meetings; time-consuming; lower costs	Community centers, privately owned buildings, churches, synagogues
Laboratory schools	College or university	Preschool, infant/toddlers	Full-day and/or half-day	Students and teachers often participate in teacher training and research activities; offer model programs	Located on or near campus
Employer sponsored	Individual business or corporation	Infant/toddlers, preschooler, school age	Full-day and/or half-day	Is an employee benefit option for parents; may be available as a voucher for any child care arrangement	Often on or near job site; hospitals, factories, and government agencies, as well as child care centers and family child care homes
For profit (proprietary)	Corporations and individuals	Infant/toddler, preschool, kindergarten, before-school and after-school ages	Full-day and/or half-day	May be part of a national/regional chain or individually owned; great variety of services and programs offered year-round; major purpose is to make a profit	Individual centers owned by franchise or corporation
Nonprofit centers	Community, churches, synagogues, government agencies	Infant/toddlers, preschool, school age	Full-day and/or half-day	Subsidized by sponsoring organization or government agency, which often provides low or free rent	Community buildings, government office buildings, churches, synagogues
Programs in religious institutions	Religious organization	Infant/toddler, preschool, school age	Full-day and/or half-day	May be a community outreach program where no religious dogma is taught or may be part of the ministry of the sponsor and include religious dogma in the curriculum; tends to be one of the largest providers of child care in the United States; tax exempt as a nonprofit; sharing space with congregational programs may be difficult	Churches, synagogues
Before-school and after-school care	Public schools, community organizations, YMCAs, YWCAs, churches, synagogues	Preschool and elementary school ages	Before and after school hours	Safe place for children during parent's working hours; may provide holiday, vacations, and summer programs	Schools, community centers, YMCAs, YWCAs, child care centers
Nannies	Individual families	Age(s) of children in family, generally preschoolers and elementary ages	According to the family's needs	Very personalized option; nanny may live with the family and may have other household responsibilities; trained in child development	In child's home
Friends and family members	Individuals	Infant/toddler, preschool, school age	Flexible according to parent and caregiver needs; may be full or part time	Can offer stability within a family setting; personal connections; flexibility to meet needs of parents; care for sick children	In friend, family, or child's home

(Continued)

## Chart of Variations of Early Childhood Programs—cont'd

Type	Sponsor	Ages	Schedule	Key Characteristics	Settings
Early intervention	Government agencies	Infant/toddler, preschool	Dependent on child's needs	Mandated by the Education of the Handicapped Amendments Act of 1986 for children who are at risk or developmentally delayed; includes comprehensive services; multidisciplinary approach; and Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is created for each child	In homes, centers, schools
Teen parent program	School district	Infant/toddler, preschool	Full-day and/or part-day	Available in high schools as a support service for teens with young children and as education classes for those without children; parents work part-time in the classroom to observe and learn child development and guidance principles	On campus
Home-schooling	Individual family	Ages of children in family	Determined by family	Extreme time commitment because one parent is the teacher; mixed-age grouping; parents often disillusioned with public school and/or want to teach their religious beliefs; lack accountability	
Family Child Care	Individual	Infant to Early Elementary	Flexible; may be full or Part-time	Home setting, wide developmental range, small, family grouping	In caregiver's home

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### TeachSource Digital Download

**Figure 2-4** Families have many options to choose from when selecting early childhood programs.

and toddlers are involved. Infant and toddler caregivers support the child's family structure in the following ways:

- Involve the parents in the everyday decisions about the care of their child.
- Provide families with information about the child's day.
- Strengthen the child's sense of belonging to that particular family.

Caregiving routines are at the heart of the infant/toddler program. The caregiver in a quality infant/toddler center understands that feeding, diapering, and playing are, in fact, the curriculum of this age group. The challenge is to find ways to use these daily routines to interact, develop trust and security, and provide educational opportunities. In many cases, the caregiver's role extends to helping parents use these same common occurrences to promote the optimal development of their child.

Infant/Toddler programs differ from those created for 3- and 4-year-olds:

- The mobility of the toddler requires different amounts of space and time in the schedule than are required for infants.

- Common routines such as diapering create the curriculum as caregivers talk with the babies about what they are doing and what is happening to them.
- Routines are the focus of the toddler's day. Mealtimes and toileting provide daily opportunities for toddlers to explore and to express their emerging sense of self. Hand washing—even eating—becomes a time to fill, to taste, to dump, to pick up.
- The curriculum emerges from a developmental need toddlers have of “Me! Mine!” To foster that independence, that wanting to “do it myself,” routines that allow for experimentation, mistakes, and messes make a good toddler curriculum.

Good programs for infants and toddlers, then, are distinctly arranged for them and are not simply modified versions of what works well in a program for 3-year-olds.

### Kindergarten

The kindergarten year is one of transition from early childhood programs into a more formal school setting. Kindergarten programs are universally available throughout the United States. They are found in elementary public and private schools, churches, and as part of preschool child care centers.

There are three major issues affecting kindergarten today:

1. Whole-day programs. Only a few states fund full-day programs. Too often the arguments regarding the costs of such programs overshadow a more basic question: What are the best and most appropriate kindergarten programs, teaching methods, and curricula, regardless of the length of day?
2. Every state establishes an arbitrary date (e.g., September) by which children must be a certain age to enter kindergarten. In the United States, compulsory age for kindergarten ranges from 5 to 8 years. In recent years, some parents hold children out for 1 year and enroll them when they are 6 years old; teachers retain many children each year in kindergarten; and administrators have created an array of kindergarten-substitute programs called *developmental*, *extra-year*, or *transitional kindergartens*. By the time they finally reach kindergarten, children are now in class with late 4-year-olds as well as 5- and 6-year-olds—a vast developmental span under one roof. Some of the methods used to create more homogeneous kindergarten classrooms, or to raise expectations for kindergarten admittance, are inappropriate uses of screening and readiness tests; discouragement or denial of entrance for eligible children; creation of transitional classes for those who are considered not ready for kindergarten; and an increasing use of retention (NAECS/NAEYC, 2001).
3. Public prekindergartens are often created for children who are from low-income families and/or are at risk due to poverty, language barriers, and literacy skills. These programs focus on helping children improve their skills and become ready for kindergarten.
4. The standards-based movement has changed expectations of what kindergartners will learn. There is a greater emphasis on academics in kindergarten, especially in math, literacy, and science. As a result, there is more testing (starting in third grade) that has implications for what is being taught in kindergartens.

## 2-3d Early Elementary Grades

Early childhood is defined as children from birth through age 8 years. Often overlooked as part of a comprehensive view of young children are grades one, two, and three,

### Redshirting and Readiness

### Brain Research says

Neuroscience has established the fact that the brain is constantly changing. This *plasticity* means that the brain is always adapting and reorganizing on a daily basis. New connections are being created by everyday experiences and learning is taking place. Brain plasticity persists into adulthood but is especially pronounced in the early stages of life. At the same time the brain is growing, it is *pruning* itself, getting rid of unused synapses in a “use it or lose it” function. If the brain is rewiring itself so extensively in the preschool and early elementary years, and requires meaningful, positive experiences to grow, it begs the question: “Why is redshirting, or keeping children back one year, still being practiced?” It would appear that redshirting is actually counterproductive because it deprives the child of a challenging and stimulating school environment. The best way to give

children the greatest opportunity to learn is to put them in their age-appropriate classroom setting as soon as possible where their brains are immersed in growing, learning, and changing.

The issue of school readiness has been a hot topic for years. Early childhood professionals agree that children should be able to enter kindergarten when they are of legal age and that schools should be prepared to meet the needs of children where they are in their development. This is supported by recent brain development research that stresses stimulation and challenges as a way to foster brain growth and learning. Instead, schools have developed a variety of methods noted earlier to create more homogeneous classes rather than address the variety of developmental stages of children of kindergarten age. (See further discussion of school readiness in Chapter 15.)

There are many reasons children enter school without the resources and tools to succeed, such as poverty, language and cultural differences, access to high-quality early education programs, and lack of effective early intervention that includes comprehensive services.

Readiness has been defined as ready children, ready families, ready communities, ready early care and education, and ready schools (Rhode Island KIDS COUNT, 2005). All of these are necessary if we want all children to be ready for successful school experiences that use their brain potential to greatest advantage.

#### Questions

1. When might it be appropriate to delay a child's entry into school?
2. Why do disadvantaged children have the most to lose from delayed entry into school?